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The Canterbury Poets

CONTEMPORARY GERMAN POETRY

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CONTEMPORARY GERMAN
POETRY.¹ SELECTED AND
TRANSLATED BY JETHRO
BITHELL, M.A., LECTURER IN
GERMAN AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF MANCHESTER.

THE WALTER SCOTT PUBLISHING CO., LTD.

LONDON AND FELLING-ON-TYNE.

NEW YORK: 3 EAST 14TH STREET.

1909.

To
Richard Dehmel.

“Ungdom pokker paa døren.”—BYGMESTER SOLNESS.

SOUL of the clashing clouds that terrorize
The Fathers until they a refuge take
In temples that thy winds of wings shall break
Above the god who knows not that he dies:

Soon as thy wrath sets free the writhen skies
Thy rain of rimes is a deep sun-washed lake,
Cooling the feverous sands of modern ache,
And over it enchanted butterflies.

And plaintive swallows like a shuttle flit
From thought to thought, even as the stars are knit,
Till, weary of wrestling with the bulk of Wrong,
Thou liest in the arms of Midnight, who
Listens with bated breath and rapt ears to
The beating of the tender heart of Song.

J. BITHELL

WYK AUF FÖHR, NORTH SEA,
August 15th, 1909.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	xvii
NOTE - - - - -	xxvii
BIBLIOGRAPHY - - - - -	xxix
ADLER, FRIEDRICH—	
By the Waterfall - - - - -	1
BAUM, PETER—	
Horror - - - - -	3
Psalms of Love - - - - -	3
BENZMANN, HANS—	
Maiden Dreams - - - - -	5
On Ways of Gloaming Dark - - - - -	6
BETHGE, HANS—	
A Spring Evening - - - - -	6
BIERBAUM, OTTO JULIUS—	
Milly - - - - -	7
Jeannette - - - - -	8
Josephine - - - - -	9
Dusk Depression - - - - -	10
Kindly Vision - - - - -	11
Dream through the Gloaming - - - - -	11
Whirled Away - - - - -	12

BIERBAUM, OTTO JULIUS (Contd.)—		PAGE
Evening	- - - - -	12
Maestro Death	- - - - -	13
Blacksmith Pain	- - - - -	15
 BODMAN, BARON EMANUEL VON—		
At the Piano	- - - - -	15
The Garden	- - - - -	16
Thy Mouth	- - - - -	16
Enigma	- - - - -	17
The Road	- - - - -	17
 BUSSE, CARL—		
First Days of Autumn	- - - - -	18
In the Night of the Full Moon	- - - - -	18
Over the Mountains	- - - - -	19
 BUSSE-PALMA, GEORG—		
The Books of Life	- - - - -	19
 DAUTHENDEY, MAXIMILIAN—		
Angels Gray	- - - - -	21
Winds Torment the Trees	- - - - -	21
Past the Sweet Lilac Clover-field	- - - - -	21
As he were Wounded croaks the Raven	- - - - -	22
Our Eyes so Empty	- - - - -	22
On thy Visage	- - - - -	23
The Air as Lead	- - - - -	23
I looked into the Garden	- - - - -	23
Thy Breast with my Breast was one	- - - - -	24
Silence waves into the Room	- - - - -	24
 DEHMEL, RICHARD—		
The Silent Town	- - - - -	25
Hieroglyph	- - - - -	25
Across the River	- - - - -	26

CONTENTS.

ix

DEHMEL, RICHARD (*Contd.*)—

PAGE

Helplessness	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
In the Eddy	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
Angry Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
To —?	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
Ideal Landscape	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
Landing	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
From a Sad Breast	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Know'st Thou Yet?	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
A Trysting	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
A Grave	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
Venus Primitiva	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
Venus Pandemos	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
Venus Regina	-	-	-	-	-	-	36
The Maid	-	-	-	-	-	-	42
The Labourer	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
Harvest Song	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
Threatening Prospect	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
The Harp	-	-	-	-	-	-	46
The Critic	-	-	-	-	-	-	48

DOLOROSA—

The Elevation	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

FALKE, GUSTAV—

Devout	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
The Poppy Field	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
Strand-Thistle	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
Fairy Tale	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
Behind the Dike	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
The Foolish Hunter	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
The Wave	-	-	-	-	-	-	53
Prisoned	-	-	-	-	-	-	55

FITGER, ARTHUR—

Evening Prayer	-	-	-	-	-	-	56
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

FLAISCHLEN, CĂSAR—		PAGE
Leaves from a Diary	- - - - -	57
Most Quietly at Times	- - - - -	59
On Short and Shorter Days	- - - - -	60
Tandaradei	- - - - -	60
Sin	- - - - -	61
FORBES-MOSSE, IRENE—		
The Grated Garden	- - - - -	62
Without Rest	- - - - -	63
Grey	- - - - -	64
First Days of Spring	- - - - -	65
Psyche at the Gate	- - - - -	65
Autumn Magic	- - - - -	66
I sate in Noon's Dead Glow	- - - - -	67
GEIGER, ALBERT—		
Song of the Buds	- - - - -	68
Ye Blessèd Moons of my Night	- - - - -	68
Forest Idyll	- - - - -	70
The Dying Maiden	- - - - -	70
Two Pictures of Mary	- - - - -	71
Red Carnations	- - - - -	73
Over the Amber-Yellow Desert	- - - - -	74
GINZKEY, FRANZ KARL—		
The Poor Man's Dream	- - - - -	77
The Grave	- - - - -	77
A Blessèd End	- - - - -	78
Voices in Spring	- - - - -	79
HARDT, ERNST—		
The Spectre	- - - - -	81

CONTENTS.

xi

HARTLEBEN, OTTO ERICH—

PAGE

The Adventurer	-	-	-	-	-	-	82
Ode of Love	-	-	-	-	-	-	82
In Silent Summer Air	-	-	-	-	-	-	83
It was the Fragrance streaming from thy Hair	-	-	-	-	-	-	83
A Monthly Rose	-	-	-	-	-	-	84

HENCKELL, KARL—

Now Shadows Dark	-	-	-	-	-	-	84
Come in the Wood, Marie	-	-	-	-	-	-	85

HILLE, PETER—

Voice of the Forest	-	.	-	-	-	-	86
School-Snake	-	-	-	-	-	-	86
The Maiden	-	-	-	-	-	-	87
Beauty	-	-	-	-	-	-	87
The Morn of the Marriage Night	-	-	-	-	-	-	88

HOFMANNSTHAL, HUGO VON—

Two	-	-	-	-	-	-	92
Ballad of the Outer Life	-	-	-	-	-	-	93
Many indeed must perish in the Keel	-	-	-	-	-	-	94
Chose Vécue	-	-	-	-	-	-	95
Thy Face	-	-	-	-	-	-	96
Stanzas on Mutability	-	-	-	-	-	-	96

HOLZ, ARNO—

A Leave-Taking	.	-	-	-	-	-	98
Folk-Song	-	-	-	-	-	-	99
He was a Lad like those	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Roses Red	-	-	-	-	-	-	101
By Night around my Temple Grove	-	-	-	-	-	-	102

HUCH, RICARDA—	PAGE
Many a Year has gone over the Land	103
Yearning	104
LACHMANN, HEDWIG—	
To the Artist	104
Faithful unto Death	105
Home-Sickness	106
A Walk	106
LASKER-SCHÜLER, ELSE—	
We Two	107
Chaos	107
May Roses	108
Love-Song	109
Dirge	109
My Love-Song	111
Eve's Song	111
Zebaoth	112
Love's Flight	112
LILIENCRON, BARON DETLEV VON—	
Ere Noise and Nast	113
Death in the Cornfield	115
Who Knows Where?	116
Inscription	117
Holger the Hunter	118
Wiebke Pogwisch	119
The Death of Love	121
Pietà	122
The Country Waltz	124
To a Dead Lady	125
Far Prospect	126
The Island of the Blessed	127

CONTENTS.

xiii

LILIENCRON, BARON DETLEV VON (<i>Contd.</i>)—		PAGE
After Shooting Game	. . . . .	127
From Childhood's Days	. . . . .	127
In a Great City	. . . . .	128
MADELEINE, MARIE—		
Lendemain	. . . . .	129
Sappho	. . . . .	130
Salvation	. . . . .	131
Salome	. . . . .	132
MIEGEL, AGNES—		
Spring on the Baltic	. . . . .	134
The Maiden's Prayer	. . . . .	134
Thy Hands	. . . . .	135
Fair Agnete	. . . . .	135
A Chronicle	. . . . .	136
Knight Errant	. . . . .	137
Anne Bullen	. . . . .	138
Madeleine Bothwell	. . . . .	140
Spring Evening	. . . . .	142
The Children of Cleopatra	. . . . .	142
Abishag the Shunammite	. . . . .	143
Life Unborn	. . . . .	145
Aphrodite	. . . . .	146
MOMBERT, ALFRED—		
Waters Weltering	. . . . .	147
The Rising of the Moon	. . . . .	149
The Lake	. . . . .	150
Now	. . . . .	150
Spring	. . . . .	151
Cena	. . . . .	151
The Rising Moon	. . . . .	152
Petition	. . . . .	153

MOMBERT, ALFRED (<i>Contd.</i>)—	PAGE
The Town	153
Belovèd	154
Along the Strand	154
The Moon Behind Me	155
At Day's Decline	155
For a New World	156
Sleeping they bear me	157
MORGENSTERN, CHRISTIAN—	
Little Bird Melancholy	158
PAULSEN, ELISABETH—	
Question	158
Sigh	159
A Stranger	159
Liberation	160
RILKE, RAINER MARIA—	
O Seldom	162
How Glorious the Chrysanthemums	162
Prayer of the Maidens to Mary	163
The Great Towns, Lord	164
The Women to the Poet	165
Abishag	165
Love-Song	167
The Elopement	167
Esther	168
ROFFHACK, ALBERT—	
At the Gate of Hamadan	169
SCHAUKAL, RICHARD—	
The Night I Greet	171
Sounds in the Night	171
Love and Death	171

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	xvii
NOTE	xxvii
BIBLIOGRAPHY	xxix
ADLER, FRIEDRICH—	
By the Waterfall	1
BAUM, PETER—	
Horror	3
Psalms of Love	3
BENZMANN, HANS—	
Maiden Dreams	5
On Ways of Gloaming Dark	6
BETHGE, HANS—	
A Spring Evening	6
BIERBAUM, OTTO JULIUS—	
Milly	7
Jeannette	8
Josephine	9
Dusk Depression	10
Kindly Vision	11
Dream through the Gloaming	11
Whirled Away	12

WEIGAND, WILHELM—	PAGE
Breakers - - - - -	187
At the Wall of Paradise - - - - -	188
WERTHEIMER, PAUL—	
Souls - - - - -	189
The Cloth of Tears - - - - -	190
ZWEIG, STEPHAN—	
The Dark Butterfly - - - - -	190
Bruges - - - - -	191

INTRODUCTION.

IN Goethe, Schiller, and Heine Germany has three poets of international reputation. Count Platen (1796-1835), the greatest of German verse-smiths of the old school, and Nikolaus Lenau (1802-50), a fascinating poet of the Byronic type, are scarcely known in England; while Eduard Mörike (1804-75), who, after long waiting for adequate recognition, is now considered a lyric poet of the first rank, is only known to us by George Meredith's translation of his "Schön Rohtraut." After Mörike came a long string of writers whose chief characteristic is their perfection of form, "classic" writers re-elaborating old themes, carrying on the flawless chiselling of Platen, almost always chaste and distinguished, but rarely inspired. Most of these poets were gathered together at Munich by King Max of Bavaria, and are hence known as the "Munich School."

It is not to be denied that in the great body of

their work there is little that is absolutely new. They are cunning craftsmen who have learned from more robust masters than themselves, and who hand on to their disciples an art still more refined but somewhat thinned. Above all, they are stationary in subject-matter and thought: their work bears little relation to the ethical and social movements of their day. "Goldschnittlyrik," poetry with gilt edges, is the title given to the great mass of this eminently respectable work by the advocates of a more daring style who come on the scene about 1880.

Poets of considerable originality, however, were still living when the revolt began: Theodor Storm (1817-88), Gottfried Keller (1819-90), Konrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825-98), and Martin Greif (b. 1839). Others, such as Eduard Grisebach (1845-1906), had begun to work the fruitful mine of Satanism; so that the ground was well prepared when, in 1885, a group of young poets launched their manifesto in their Anthology "Moderne Dichtercharaktere," of which a second edition, entitled "Gründeutschland," appeared in 1886. The propaganda was trumpeted into the world in two bombastic prefaces, one by Hermann Conradi, who, two years later, was to publish the first volume of verse to show the influence of

Nietzsche, and the other by Karl Henckell, the future laureate of the Socialist party.

The specimens of poetry printed by the young iconoclasts do not fulfil the promise of the programme. But the revolution had already been successful two years before. In 1883 Baron Detlev von Liliencron, a retired officer, had published his *Adjutantenritte*. "This book," says Hans Bethge in the brilliant introduction to his Anthology, "stands in its freshness like a blue-eyed warder before the gates of the lyric poetry of to-day. Its verses were bells chiming with sweet allure-ment over all the land, and calling the nation to resurrection."

Before Liliencron there had been a proverb: *Holsatia non cantat*. This he disproved: in his poems his native province of Schleswig-Holstein, with its marshes, its leagues of rolling heather, and its sad, grey sea over oozy flats, lives and sings indeed. It was not till his fortieth year that he began to write, but during the remainder of his life he poured out, in verse often more technically perfect than that of the Munich School, the accumulated memories of his rich and reckless life. He is first and foremost a poet of the open air: of war, and of the chase; and the directness of his style, the familiarity of his themes, and the hardihood,

not to say brutality, of his treatment, soon put an end to the vogue of the parlour poets.

As Schiller was to Goethe, Richard Dehmel is to Liliencron. Not merely in the sense that during Liliencron's later years they were neighbours and staunch friends, but also in the sense that each learned from the other, and that, while Liliencron lives in the moment, Dehmel is philosophical. Dehmel's ferocious masculinity rings out in the loud onflow with its shock of consonants of his lyric verse; he is the most virile, and at the same time the most ruthless, of all German poets. His books, *Aber die Liebe* (1893) and *Weib und Welt* (1896) are landmarks in recent literary history; while in *Verwandlungen der Venus*, a volume which in the edition, now being issued, of his complete works, has been taken over from *Aber die Liebe* and extended, he illuminates the passion of love in all its phases. Through the latter book runs his vital idea that love is liberation ("Die Liebe ist Befreiung").

Dehmel is the best of the Socialist poets. Arno Holz, Karl Henckell, and Reinhold Maurice von Stern, militant adherents of the movement, are more successful in their verse which deals with other themes than Socialism.

Much influenced by Liliencron is Gustav Falke,

a poet the delicate pencilling of whose verse is blurred by translation. He is a poet of family life, and also of children, for whom he has written a charming story-book *Drei Gute Kameraden*.

A remarkable phenomenon in recent German life was the short flourishing of the *Überbrettelbühnen*, miniature music-halls on which poets recited their works. Poems which had to go down with beer were not likely to be consistently dignified in tone; and, though the movement produced some very good light verse, notably that of Otto Julius Bierbaum, it tended, on the whole, to degrade distinguished poets.

Liliencron, Dehmel, Falke, and Bierbaum may be classed as realists, though there is symbolism in all of them, especially in Dehmel, the disciple of Verlaine. Albert Geiger and Franz Karl Ginzkey might almost be called poets of the old school, but with a deepened psychology. No poet of the Munich School could have written Geiger's fascinating "Songs of Mary," naïvely hinting, as they do, that to every mother her son is the Saviour.

The symbolists properly so-called are the group of refined artists who, in the nineties, gathered round their nominal leader Stefan George. These men are disciples of Mallarmé, not only in their style, but also in the aristocratic, detached

manner in which they regard their art. Their poetry is for the chosen few, and is not a matter of bread and butter. They are poets, not journalists; whether the masses understand them or not, is a matter which does not concern them. Their work was first published in a periodical printed for private circulation only, the now famous *Blätter für die Kunst* (from 1892), selections from which were made accessible to the public in 1899 and 1905.

The best-known of this circle of difficult poets is Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the author of *Elektra*, a play which has been produced by Mrs. Patrick Campbell. A symbolist of equal rank with him is Rainer Maria Rilke, who lives in Paris.

It is customary to quote the example of the great "classic" poets, whom babes may understand, against the symbolists. But symbolism has always been employed; and it is Goethe himself who says; "Je incommensurabler und für den Verstand unfaszlicher eine poetische Produktion ist, desto besser."

Better than all the theories of the symbolists, perhaps, is the "Art poétique" of Verlaine:

" Music as rich as the rose is,
No coupled lines pair by pair,
But floating vague in the air,
With nothing that weighs down or poses.

Let not thy keen brain be racked
For words that cannot be wrong :
Dearest the drunken song
That marries vague to exact.

Veils making lovelier eyes,
Noon's shivering heat, and in warm
Autumn evenings the swarm
Of stars shining clear in the skies.

We need but the shade, but the gleam,
No colour, but chastened lights !
Only the shade unites
Clarion to flute, dream to dream.

.
Give us music more than of rimes !
Let thy verse be a thing in the skies,
Be it felt that a spirit flies
To other loves, other climes.

Let thy verse be the quest of a hint,
The crisp breeze of morning that blows,
Sipping the thyme and the rose . . .
All besides is but paper and print."

Vague, and mystic, and drunken is the poetry of Peter Hille, the helpless, happy nomad who sang the souls of maidens. A daring innovator, a creator of language, his influence is still great. Intimately connected with him are Peter Baum, and Else Lasker-Schüler. Peter Baum is a fugitive

soul split on a prism of sound. His poems are dreams, and are to be read as such. What mathematician shall reduce to plain terms, what poet's soul shall fail to understand, such a renunciation as this :

“ Be silent now and feel, how shadows creep ;
How from deep skies fall motley flames, and steep
Indented clouds stand black
O'er polished roofs that give the dead light back.

And do not seek my soul : it lies afar
Behind the sun-ball in yon tree that rocks
Its branches in the cosmos between star and star.”

And to what category shall the critic of literature assign the heroic landscape which Peter Baum calls “ The Greybeard ” :

“ Lands and seas swum thorough,
Passioned mind did harry :
Tracking now in the nights
Lands beyond the starry.

When a child I was,
Gleamed so far my pond,
Behind each tree-top greened
A realm of the time beyond.

Help me up the mountain, sons,
Close to me keeping.
Let me once again behold
The small earth sleeping.”

Whereas Peter Baum is peacefully elegiac, Else Lasker-Schüler is one flame of chaotic passion, consuming and consumed. "The black swan of Israel," says Peter Hille of her, "a Sappho whose world has yawned asunder. Her genius is a black diamond which cuts into her brow, and pains her. So sorely!" Her "Märchen" are weird things full of thoughts like sleek supple beasts prowling over a desert cooled by the moon. She preys on the brain, and thrills the senses.

Maximilian Dauthendey and Alfred Mombert are "cosmic impressionists." Such poetry as they write, think their disciples, is the poetry of the future. Mombert especially is as much a philosopher as a poet. But no mere philosopher could have imagined the glorious red-haired woman who moves, the mistress of God, through his hallucinations.

Agnes Miegel is a poetess of intense feeling and splendid originality. She has revealed in her poems the innermost thoughts of a noble woman's saddened heart.

Mrs. Forbes-Mosse, who is the widow of the late Major Forbes-Mosse of the Royal Irish Regiment, has perhaps been influenced by Albert Samain and Mr. W. B. Yeats; but she is also, like Agnes Miegel, a poetess in her own rights. She

has too, like Hedwig Lachmann, published fine translations of modern English poets.

Darwin, Walt Whitman, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Nietzsche: these are the poets who have most influenced the poetry of the last decades in Germany. Has all this influence been for the good of literature? This it is too early to decide. But one thing is certain: the lyric poets march with Ibsen towards an ideal which can only be approached by subverting all that is false and insincere. "Hjem for mennesker!"

NOTE.

THE beautiful translation of the poem "Grey" by Mrs. Forbes-Mosse is the work of Miss H. Friederichs, and has appeared in the *Westminster Gazette*. The four translations signed "H. W." are by Mrs. Harriott Wolff, herself a distinguished German poetess, who hopes to publish shortly a volume of translations of her own. Two poems signed "H. W. and J. B." are the joint work of Mrs. Wolff and myself.

I am deeply indebted to all the poets represented for their permission to quote from their works; and to Messrs. Schuster and Lœffler of Berlin, and Herr Georg Müller of Munich, for presents of books. The interest taken in the manuscript translations by Dr. Dehmel, Mrs. Forbes-Mosse, and Herr Albert Geiger, all of them excellent English scholars, has amounted to collaboration.

I must also express my warm thanks to my friends, Miss Helen A. Green and Mr. G. W. Glover, for their kindness in reading the proofs.

J. B.

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Contemporary German Poetry.

FRIEDRICH ADLER,

b. 1857.

BY THE WATERFALL.

SILENT I gaze at the cataract.
Where the rocks close in,
A mighty rushing and din,
And the waters packed
Out of the gully escape,
A broadening pendant nape
In the sunbeams pearling,
To the vale their masses hurling,
Hissing, roaring, and in foam unfurling !
And the whirling
Hurry and scurry of the flying flood !
And on and on,
With hollow-sounding ever equal thud,
The thunder of the water-wall
Fills the chasm with its fall.
In the river's
Shock the rock I stand on shivers,

FRIEDRICH ADLER.

And I see the high-hung watery dome
Breaking in a feathery comb
Of foam,
And dust of spray around me tost,
Till eyes and ears are lost
In the stupendous unison.

Intoxicating is this limitless
Uproar and noisiness;
A Sermon on the Mount, that tears
The fetters away that the spirit wears
In a weary welt
Of plagues and cares—
Fetters in the daily round scarce felt.

Be not contemned
This thinking and striving,
This scheming, contriving
In narrow boundaries hemmed—
But the highest thing is Power,
Is Power that takes
No thought, and nothing makes,
Counts not the drops nor the hour,
But rushes onwards wherever it lists,
Without plan or aiming,
Bears no keel, and will no mill-wheel drive,
Great and glorious because it exists,
Untamed, beyond taming,
Because it *only* lives, doubly alive.

PETER BAUM,

b. 1869.

HORROR.

THIS is a fearful thing to bear,
That oft to me it seems
I have thine eyes and hair.
Then, helpless, my hands supplicate,
Even as thine own,
And my lips curse me in hate,
And moan.

Thou comest over me so every evening late.

Twin carrion birds
Then o'er the churchyard fly.

PSALMS OF LOVE.

I.

THY nights moan into my days,
Through my dreams courses the blood of thy feet.
O I will drink thy tears away,
I will bear thee up under the crown of my leaves.

The crown of my leaves is cool and full of peace,
Bathed high in waters deep.
Down upon us shall drip the depths of the sky,
From seas eternal through the holy crown of leaves.

Slumber deep in my arms !
My eyes are steel-hard angels watching
Over thy peace.

II.

Thy eyes with gloom are gleaming,
And a spinning weeping
Of thy raven hair
Over the linen.

O thy pale face,
And how thy slender fingers
Over the pillows are creeping:—
Touching stammering
Of a sprouting song,
That fain would flower.

My soul with thee is seeking.

III.

When the roses wonder open at morn,
Fain would I come to thee !
Bring cool dew to thy brow,
And laughter to thy lips.

In my nights thy loneliness affrights me ;
Nestle deep in the pinions of my soul !
Darkly they rustle over the seas,
To find a way to thee.

IV.

When the night goes hence,
Let us from goblets dark
Reach to each other our blood.

And be one eye, one soul,
Shivering over the valleys,
Burning chalices clear.

Seest thou the morning wind? It bears
Hovering life from bush to bush,
Blade of grass to blade.
Be thou mine!

HANS BENZMANN,

b. 1869.

MAIDEN DREAMS.

SHE stitched, and all the while did sing,
She sang the sad song of the murdered king,
She sang of lilies that grow pale,
Of flames of love that flicker and fail,
Of the sailor far in the dirk night blind,
Of maidens that are left behind.

She sang till evening darkened her . . .
And when from her breasts she took the stomacher,
She fastened a blue endive spray,
That drives love-sickness all away,
Into her belt, and laid it by,
And fell a-sleeping with a sigh . . .

ON WAYS OF GLOAMING DARK.

WE loved on summer ways of gloaming dark,
The moon swam in the warm rain like a bark :
Like far-off fortune in the womb of time,
Like secret love dreamed sweetly into rime
It shimmered in the green pond in the park—
We loved on summer ways of gloaming dark . . .

The rain dripped from the branches, and the stark
Scent of the elders pierced like song of lark ;
The bushes rustled music in our wake,
And, in the moist and coolness of the brake,
Silent in love's solemnity we grew . . .

Then from thy mouth, moist with a fever-dew,
The veil of brown I feverishly tore,
And in sweet haste I kissed thy red lips sore :
So have I, in the summer-sultry park,
Lain on thy breast as in a heaving bark . . .

HANS BETHGE,

b. 1876.

A SPRING EVENING.

THE nightingale would not be stayed,
The elder was heavy still with rain,
Your gentle hands in mine you laid,
And through the flowering country strayed
A distant mill-weir's dreamy strain.

The perfume on my senses swept
That from your fabulous hair out-brims.
Tears within your eyelids slept,
And from your hands a yearning crept
Miraculously through my limbs . . .

OTTO JULIUS BIERBAUM,

b. 1865.

MILLY.

YESTERDAY Miss Milly
 Asked me in to tea.
Imitation lily
 Seemed her dress to be:
Habited like silly
 Pierrette was she.
Even a monk on Milly
Would have, willy-nilly,
 Gazed delightedly.

Chamber was in cherry
 I was shown into.
Lustres gilded sherry
 O'er a sofa blue.
And she was so merry!
 Sparkling with *esprit*!
It was charming, very!
Room as red as perry,
 Blossom-white was she.

Then we two went driving,
In a coach on hire,
To the happy, thriving
Land of Heart's-Desire.
And, for safe arriving
In that country kind—
Best of grooms for wiving,
He himself conniving—
Cupid sat behind.

JEANNETTE.

I.

WHAT's my sweetheart?—A laundress is she.
Where does she live?—Down by the river.
Where the Isar roars, and the bridge stands high,
And the fluttering shirts hang out to dry:
There lives my pleasure-giver.

In the little cot with the garden plot,
And the shutters green a-showing,
There at the ironing-board she stands,
With the smoothing-iron in her clever hands:
And how her cheeks are glowing!

There she stands in a lily-white blouse
Figured with many a blossom;
No corset fastens the soft wavy billows
That bob underneath it, the easiest of pillows,
The swelling rounds of her bosom.

II.

A bed, a cupboard, a table, a bench,
And in the midst a strapping wench,
My dolly, my jolly Jeannette.
Her eyes are brown, and so is her hair,
With its curls here, there, and everywhere,
And of cherry-ripe lips she's a swelling pair,
Jeannette! Jeannette!

There's ivy growing right up to the eaves,
And love at the lattice peeps through the leaves,
My dolly, my jolly Jeannette.
Bang goes the door, on my neck she springs,
We are alone, and the old wind sings
The song of a couple of happy things.
Jeannette! Jeannette!

JOSEPHINE.

I.

THE sky is blue, the weather is fine,
Let us go a-walking, O lady mine!
She doesn't say nay,
So into the May
Like two spring frigates we sail away.

Like snow of blossoms was her dress,
Her hat a flowering wilderness
With a moss-green ribbon hanging behind,
Like a flapping flag it went in the wind,
And along by the little fairy there
My frock-coat stalked like a great black bear.

How rare a ray
Had that May-day!
As fresh, as bright, as bold, as coy
As the memory of childhood joy;
So holy, so with love elate;
How far art thou, O world diseased!
Far from us with thy strife, thy hate,
Thy greed that cannot be appeased!
We are such children, and O! so pleased!

II.

Night wafts down on the ships,
Pale stars over the bay.
"You, do you love me, say?"
And she laughs, and kisses my lips.

And we turn, and home we tramp.
Asleep are all good people,
Only the hours in the steeple . . .
And I put out the lamp.

DUSK DEPRESSION.

NIGHT-NOISES now awaken :
I feel so God-forsaken,
 So wretched everywhere.
In homes the lamps are lighted;
To none I am invited,
 I go to the little river that flows along through
 meadows bare.

So sluggish is its flowing,
 Far round the meadows going,
 In heavy dumbness gray.
 And such is my life's motion,
 Flows to a deep, gray ocean,
 Flat between fallow meadows soundless and
 tired it runs away.

KINDLY VISION.

NOT in sleep I saw it, but in daylight,
 Clear and beautiful by day before me:
 Saw a meadow overgrown with daisies,
 Round a cottage white in green embowered;
 Statues of the gods gleam in the arbour.
 And the lady that I walk with loves me,
 With a quiet spirit in the coolness
 And the peacefulness of this white dwelling,
 Full of beauty waiting till we enter.

DREAM THROUGH THE GLOAMING.

BROAD meadows in gloaming gray,
 The stars of the moon graze drove by drove,
 To the fairest of ladies goes my way,
 Far over meadows in gloaming gray,
 Deep in the jasmin grove.

Through gloaming gray into love's land,
 With leisurely steps I take my time;
 I am drawn by a soft and satiny band
 Through gloaming gray into love's land,
 Into a blue, mild clime.

WHIRLED AWAY.

IN tresses blond a velvet ribbon green,
A little rose-red colour bound between,
The whole child had barely turned sixteen,
And the month was May.

So came it that the sun, in spider's way,
Spun us into a mock-gold network gay;
The bud burst ope, ah God ! it was in May,
The bud burst ope.

I would have loved her with love deep and kind,
I would have cherished her in heart and mind.
F'or whom, now she is whistled down the wind,
Blooms my musk-rose ?

EVENING.

THE gray vulture pinions of night
Rustle over the lake.
In claws of bronze the monster bird
Carries the corpse of the day.
Behind him a track of blood
Billows out on the west.
The swarthy eyes of the forest
Raise their needle lids,
And dumbly stare
At the troop of wrathful shadows
That follow the robber's flight.

Down from the skies
In frosty winds
Breathes a thought :
On pinions black
All life hovers
Silently
Into the valley of Death.

MAESTRO DEATH.

I HAVE been dancing at a ball to-night ;
The dresses fluttered, and the air grew close,
Bosoms were panting, and eyes flickering
Like fire when down the chimney dives the wind.

O you, 'tis you I want ! Dance you with me !
Hark how the waltz blows !! As the south wind blows !!
Hark how in passion storms the violin !
Its sounds like flakes of fire are flying bright,
And warm, so warm ! O how the mad waltz burns !
Come ! Let us dance together into the flames !

Then stopped the fiddle. From the orchestra fell,
Even as a stone in marshy water falls,
When sluggish rings fade outwards in flat waves,
A hollow tone fell like a colourless cloud,
A tone, we could not fathom whence it came,
Broad, heavy, slow, into the dancer's coil.

The yellow gas-light shrank and spluttered out,
A wet ice-wind swept through the dancing-hall.

When we looked up : in phosphorescent light
Stood naked Death at the conductor's desk.
With folded arms he stood, smiling serene.
Then, cautiously, out of his chest he broke
A rib, and lightly touched the desk with it,
And so conducted, quite absorbed it seemed,
Enraptured by the tunes none heard but him.

He rocked himself upon his hollow hips,
And took the tempo slow now and now quick,
Now urging them who played wind-instruments,
And now the players of the violins,
Swaying most elegantly, music all.

And we all stood with heads turned up to gaze,
Rigid with horror, seeing only him,
And all about us blackest night of nights.
But soon the waltz's soul upon us seized,
Soul of the inaudible waltz, and round we whirled,
And danced from end to end of the cold, dark hall,
And rocked ourselves in ecstasy, and swerved,
Pressing to breasts our breast, and, whispering
Of longing and of love, smiled in the dance,
And kissed each other.

And Maestro Death,
In phosphor light at the conductor's desk,
Flourished his rib. We whispering hollowly.

We never danced so fine a dance before.
We tasted the enchantment of the leaf
That blows in autumn breezes from the branch
Down in unsteady circles to the ground.

BLACKSMITH PAIN.

PAIN is a blacksmith,
Hard is his hammer ;
With flying flames
His hearth is hot ;
A straining storm
Of forces ferocious
Blows his bellows.
He hammers hearts
And tinkers them,
With blows tremendous,
Till hard they hold.—
Well, well forges Pain.—
No storm destroys,
No frost consumes,
No rust corrodes,
What Pain has forged.

BARON EMANUEL VON BODMAN.

b. 1874.

AT THE PIANO.

THY hands still lie on the piano keys,
Thy gaze a distance nigh before thee sweeps,
And still, as though the walls lay open, sees
Stars shimmering over dark abysmal deeps.

Thou hear'st me not as I behind thee glide.
Still drink thy ears the song that vanished all.
I bend above and let a soft kiss fall
On thy soft hair that shivering shrinks aside.

16 BARON EMANUEL VON BODMAN.

Thou leanest back thy hair upon my kiss,
Once more rings out the starry bright abyss,
And all the joy and sorrow that we feel
Thy hands to both of us reveal.

THE GARDEN.

Now is the red vine full of the sun's blood,
I step into thy garden with no pain
After long absence. Here on this bench of wood
We stared into blue nights without a stain,
While our young yearning swelled. Thou hast been
dead
Three motley years. The chestnuts strew the ground.
Now seems it, when I feel their russet red,
Soon on the gravel must thy light tread sound.

Still flows the stalactite fountain clearly there,
And I am by a sadness sweet down-weighed,
As if the heavy fragrance of thy hair
Here in the old familiar garden strayed.

THY MOUTH.

SOON as I saw thy mouth, a seething
For thy mouth's sake shot through my veins.
A prayer suppressed thy mouth is breathing,
A prayer of unsuspected pains.

Thy mouth, I feel, in the close nights smoulders,
Beneath old ash of kisses chill.
Now loose thy sombre hair on thy shoulders,
And keep still !

ENIGMA.

THE body with water I wet,
 That another before me possessed.
 Some day I may forget
 The shadow between breast and breast,
 That darkens at dawning of light,
 And only in luxury, when
 Star is in star shining bright,
 Vanishes out of my ken.
 The smile of thy lips is it speech?
 What in thy heart is writ?
 I dive in thy face, I reach
 Never the ~~bottom~~ of it.

THE ROAD.

To the golden-gated city
 All of us are bowne.
 Patience does sometimes forsake us,
 And we clench our fists: "For pity,
 Which of all these roads will take us
 To the golden town?"

While the stronger march, the weaker
 Die of thirst perforce.
 Here and there a wiser seeker
 Finds the hidden source,
 And, when he has drained the beaker,
 Trudges on his course.

Though, while every pilgrim paces,
 Night blurs out the ways,

Yet, before the dark is dimming
All, the wanderer stays,
Sees the near and far-off spaces
In a purple splendour swimming:
Towers, long sunken, blaze;
Then, his eyes with tears o'er-brimming,
Back he turns his gaze.

CARL BUSSE,

b. 1872.

FIRST DAYS OF AUTUMN.

Now autumn comes, the air grows strangely pale,
To fall the reddened apple needs no gale,
The storks have long since left the yellowing land,
The night grows cold, and All-Saints is at hand.
The leaves will soon be shed, now heart finds heart.
—Dear, is it time for you and me to part?

IN THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON.

ALL the full-moon night in the coomb
Roars a fallow deer in rut,
Wading through the silvered broom,
With a timid mouse-soft foot.

I am strangely seized, oppressed
By his stifled rage of yearning,
And I feel in my own breast
Tears withholden wildly burning.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS.

OVER the mountains, far, far to wander,
 Say the people, is Fortune's home.
 So with the pilgrims I crossed over yonder,
 Back with tear-dimmed eyes I clomb.
 Over the mountains, far, far beyond them,
 There people told me, is Fortune's home.

GEORG BUSSE-PALMA,

b. 1876.

THE BOOKS OF LIFE.

THE Books of Life are lustfully held down
 Between strong thighs of sphinxes broadly breasted.
 The clasps but with the thighs are open wrested,
 And curly runes seen of the pages brown.
 The unravelled striving of the human race
 Stares from between hot knees into our face.

And this can but be known of those that shake,
 Sick with the steam of hips wide-spread in lust :
 The kernel of the law is, Breed, ye must :
 And he that mankind loves, men let him make.
 The King high Preservation, this that saith,
 While grinds his teeth his ancient foeman Death.

The Roman who sprang o'er the rock, to save
 The young town for its destiny glorious,
 Only did consciously what all of us
 Unconscious into beds of marriage drave.
 Rome sacrificed its best, and Rome was great.
 Grow weak by woman, strength she will create !

But wherefore into dust falls not their flesh,
This short-lived race that still, when it achieves
Beauty, sinks down from it, and ever leaves
Its heirs the oldest goals to storm afresh?
Why must they build old beauty over new,
And still the same the same world ever view?

Is the earth's beauty not to be surpassed?
And must what just hath perished be the dung
To make the dust of vanished ages young?
And must one thousand years dig up the last,
That where it ran it once again may run?
An ancestor, bred by his grandchild's son?

Must humankind still in a circle spin,
A clown on round heel-leather, who essays
To show his motley in new-fangled ways,
And never any new effect can win?
And is the peacock's spread of tail and strut
The aim of the eternal, sateless rut?

Oft in the Book of Life I read, and cried
"Read me these characters" with bitter lips.
The sphinx was silent, steaming from her hips
Lechery, till I sank down by her side.
Then would she answer:
"Child, thy questioning spare!
My daughters see, how sweet they are and fair."

MAXIMILIAN DAUTHENDEY,

b. 1867.

ANGELS GRAY.

ANGELS gray around me go,
And mourning look upon thee, O my soul.
They stand with pinions lame
By ashen mounds, and think ;
Within thee and without thee it is evening, O my soul.

WINDS TORMENT THE TREES.

WINDS torment the trees,
The leaves yellow, shrivel, freeze.

Men, still brown their summer cheek,
And yet their lips the last word speak,
The song is near its lees.

PAST THE SWEET LILAC CLOVER-FIELD.

PAST the sweet lilac clover-field,
Where the twin pines stand and shield
The bench between,
Like a flute's soft note is stretched
The gentle fjord, a vision sketched
Blue in reedy green.

Give me thy hand.
So silent stand the twin pines there.
And thou shalt understand
The secret of the silence of the air.
Give me thy hand . . .
And in thy hand thy heart.

AS HE WERE WOUNDED CROAKS THE
RAVEN.

As he were wounded croaks the raven,
And prophecies night and distress.
Every door with frost is graven,
And barks the hunger-hound.
Closer, closer our caress,
In our kisses no words have we found.
The larks have sung themselves dead,
And clouds have rolled the summer away.
Rocked in my arm, thy head
Knows no longer where earth lay.

OUR EYES SO EMPTY.

OUR eyes so empty,
Our kisses so withered,
We weep and are silent,
Our hearts beat no more.

The swallows are gathering out by the sea,
The swallows leave us,
They will come again,
But never more to us twain.

ON THY VISAGE.

ON thy visage
Silence hovers,
Silence that in summer's heavy forests lives,
On mountains blue with evening,
And in the cup of flowers.
A silence warm and light,
That soundless speaks proud sounds.

THE AIR AS LEAD.

THE air as lead.
White clouds silent, dank.
The hollow heaven an ashen bed.
A raven's cry
Croaks by.
The trees stand cold, and lean, and lank.
It is as though the last man's heart were dead.

I LOOKED INTO THE GARDEN.

I LOOKED into the garden, there the glory of a rose
shone in my face.
I felt it from the distance in my hand as is thy love.
Ever since I kissed thee passes not the roses' season,
The garden laughs like thee with lips so red.
Day and night are scarcely like the wafting of a fan,
A year is but the crowing of a cock,
I live it with eyes closed.

THY BREAST WITH MY BREAST WAS ONE.

THY breast with my breast was one.
Our souls from tombs out-crept,
And I saw through eyes that slept
Down sink in thee the sun.
And deep behind the sun I saw the deep,
The dream of the world unborn where all the life-
germs sleep.

Silence absolute, never a stir
At calm infinity's core;
We were all, and knew no more;
Knew only that blessed we were.

SILENCE WAVES INTO THE ROOM.

SILENCE waves into the room,
Feel'st thou the moon
Breathing richly at night's noon?
Thy hair undo,
And lean thy head out in the beams of blue.
Hark to the sea's boom on the beach,
Throwing thee treasures into thy reach;
Of old an army of wishes would in the moon arise,
The moon-night is empty of wishes in the light of
thine eyes.

RICHARD DEHMEL,

b. 1863.

THE SILENT TOWN.

A TOWN lies in the valley,
A pale day fades and dies ;
And it will not be long before
Neither moon nor starlight,
Night only fills the skies.

From all the mountain ridges
Creeps mist, and swathes the town ;
No farm, no house, no wet red roof
Can pierce the thickly woven woof,
And scarce even spires and bridges.

But as the wanderer shudders,
Deep down a streak of light rejoices
His heart ; and, through the smoke and haze,
Children's voices
Begin a gentle hymn of praise.

HIEROGLYPH.

PROBE all thy deeps,
Chain all that leaps,
Carefully grope
Nigh to thy hope.
But one thing is sure,
Love is obscure.

Every boat
In which desires sing,
Is also the throat
For their ravening.
But with hungry teeth around thee gnashing,
Jubilant Life sits flashing :
Love !

ACROSS THE RIVER.

THE night was dark and heavy, slow
And heavy cut the boat the dark ;
The others laughed around, as though
They felt the spring breathe on the bark.

Fallow, dumb, lay the wide river ;
A flickering light from the landing-place ;
Through the bald willows never a quiver.
But I looked up into thy face,

And felt thy breath imploring, and,
With young eyes crying into mine
I saw—another before me stand,
And sobbing stammer : I am thine !

Near shone the light with chastened ray,
The rigid willows' image sank,
Wavering, black, in the water gray ;
And the boat, crunching, bit the bank.

HELPLESSNESS.

BUT when thou hadst departed,
I grew so lonely-hearted,
 I longed for thee so sore.
I stood with fingers aching,
As though I should lose thee shaking
 The handle of thy barred and bolted door.

And through the panes between us
I begged with eyes as keen as
 A beggar's in the South ;
But up the steps thou wentest,
No backward look thou bentest,
 Thou didst not call me back unto thy mouth.

With senses stunned I hearkened,
Heard but in the passage darkened
 The rattling of thy keys ;
And then the shadows caught me,
That in the park had sought me,
 When we two saw the moon sink o'er the trees.

IN THE EDDY.

INTO one happy body the dance mixed
Our beings thrilled through to the very marrow ;
And I saw : her heavy hair was fixed
 Into its coil by but one silver arrow.

And then near upon mine her mouth she drew,
Curved wistfully, rich with red blood, unsteady ;
A glance without a will, and in the eddy
The arrow flashed as to the boards it flew.

Then her hot neck was to my shoulder levelled,
Her hair surged suddenly round her like a wave;
And in this moment that God gave
With a rapture that transfigured me I revelled.

ANGRY SEA.

Thus once again! Through fog and howling squall:
The sails shook, and the sailors shouted loudly;
At the bowsprit stood the water like a tall
Tower: I felt your fear in my knees: and proudly
Your unknown face beside me gloomed.

Yet once again your eye upon me frowned,
Your hair was like a flame behind you sweeping,
While wrestled in the waves a sound
As of a little child that will be weeping—
You warded me no more.

You let my arms around your shoulder lie,
Your wild wet hair my greedy mouth was lashing,
Our kiss was wonderfully sweetened by
The foam of great salt waves about us crashing—
Then I in joy cried out.

Thus once again! What shadow chills thy brow?
Or does the open ocean make thee craven?
The sea will whip thee warm! Come soon, come now!
The ferry is dancing in the foggy haven—
Out! To the heights!

TO —?

I HAVE baptized thee Withy, because of thy slender
limbs,
And since thou art the rod for God to chastise me
withal,
Yea, and because a yearning in thy posture overbrims
Even as in April days sways in the willows tall.

I know thee not—but in the tempest shock,
Some day, I shall hear thee at my door,
And I shall straightway open to thy knock,
Upon thy tameless breasts my tameless breast to lock
To beat with equal beat for evermore.

For I know thee—thy eyes like buds are glowing,
And thou wouldst flower, flower, flower !
And thy young ideas scatter like the shower
From shrubs with cataracts bespattered;
And thou wert fain as I do to defy God's tempests
blowing
Or—be shattered !

IDEAL LANDSCAPE.

THOU hadst an aureole upon thy brow,
There was an evening brightness pure and high;
Thy gaze from me was ever turned aside
Into the light, the light—
And far away the echo died
Of my rebellious cry.

LANDING.

BEFORE me my white swan, still are we cleaving
The dark sea through the callous gray of morn,
To where in the pale distance billows are heaving
Their azure heights to greet the day new-born.

And ever further we are gliding, gliding,
Golden is gilded now the dark wave's crest,
Till we behold, on the silent waters riding,
In the glory of dawn the Islands of the Blest.

Thou from my reins art freed, and I am treading,
While the boat lingers, my own native land;
Now dost thou stretch thyself with wings outspreading,
And mountest with me to the sunlit strand.

And from the mountains will be wafted singing,
To show our brothers too the path to light;
And through the deeps an echo will be ringing
Of a great joy: out of my swan-songs white.

FROM A SAD BREAST.

THE roses still are like a flame,
The dark leaves gently shake;
I in the grass am grown awake,
O that you came,
For the deep midnight's sake.

The moon is hid by the garden door,
O'er which its light is shed
On the lake with willow-shadowed shore,
In the moist clover I bury my head;
I never loved you so before!

As now I know I have not known,
 For all that ever I caressed
 Your neck, and blind your secretest
 Being enjoyed, why you would groan,
 When I o'erflowed, from your sad breast.

Had you but seen yon glowworms glide,
 Two glowworms and their light the same !
 Never again will I leave your side !
 O that you came !
 The roses still are like a flame.

KNOW'ST THOU YET?

KNOW'ST thou yet, how pale, how white,
 When I lay in eves of Maytime,
 After kisses of the daytime,
 Poured out at thy feet before thee,
 Daffodillies trembled o'er me ?

Then in deep June's azure night,
 Know'st thou yet, how soft and seething,
 When we, tired of wild caresses,
 Wove around us thy wild tresses,
 Daffodillies scents were breathing ?

At thy feet again are gleaming,
 When the silvery gloamings shimmer,
 When the nights of azure glimmer,
 Daffodillies scents are streaming.
 Know'st thou yet, how hot ? how white ?

A TRYSTING.

So was it even then. So soundlessly
Over the land the clouded air hung hot,
And underneath the weeping beech's roof
Were tangled, where is hedged the garden-plot,
The blossom-vapours of the elder-tree ;
My sultry hand she fondled, speaking not,
Voiceless with joy.

There was an odour of graves. . . No guilt is mine !
Thou pale light up above there in the sky,
Why stand'st thou like a ghost pent in his shroud !
Why wilt thou pore upon me like God's eye ?
Monitor image of the spirit bowed
Be quenched ! I broke her not ! She willed to die.
Why should an alien anguish torture me. . . .

The land grows gray. And every willow-trunk
Like smoke stands in the fog's deep starless sea.
Upon the corn the heavy sky seems sunk.
Motionless cling the wet leaves to the tree,
As though they all had poison drunk.
So silent now lies she.
I wish that I were dead.

A GRAVE.

THESE are the evenings prematurely pale.
The dahlias that in the sunlight shone
Like last frail roses, now are standing stale,
Rosettes of stone whose colour has grown wan.
The swaths of mist across the churchyard trail.

Come, sister. Yonder hedge of brass you see
 Rails round a lady withered in her spring.
 She loved me well. Come home, I am shivering.
 Life gave her nothing but her own heart : she
 Did good in silence, suffering silently.

VENUS PRIMITIVA.

O THAT the kiss could cling for ever, girl,
 Rigid as reeds stood all the staring guests,
 The kiss that in the waltz's wildest whirl
 I flung upon thy shoulders and thy breasts.

Me shall this maudlin ache no longer blight !
 I will no longer in ecstatic pain
 Toss my untired limbs through the pulsing night !
 Woman ! my begging arms to thee I strain.

O come ! my every sense shakes with desire,
 Drunk with the scent that shivers from thy shape.
 Still surges round me, O thou Queen of Fire,
 The copper silk beneath thy ashen crape.

Pour out in me the vessel of thy flame,
 Quench thou my thirst for the sin, pour out the
 cup,
 Quench thou my thirst for the terror and the shame
 Of the fires that brew and blow and burn me up.

Out of the dark lap shoots the loosened seed,
 That languishing lay long without a root,
 And I will be my blossom pure and freed,
 And rear above this rut my ripened fruit.

O come ! I sicken of unmanly joy.
O woman, come ! and take into thy vessel
The savage longing of a drunken boy
Who never yet on woman's breast did nestle.

On scent of pinks wafts darkness down the sky;
O camest thou, sweet as the white moon sets
Her gliding feet. On velvet billows I,
On purple down, on dark dim violets

Will bed thee, I will bed thee to my side,
And the chain of all my powers shall link by link
Fall free upon the body of my bride,
When I into its carpet sink and sink.

VENUS PANDEMOS.

THIS was the last time. I was lounging in
The night-café that lights the suburb gloom,
Tired with the reek of sultry sofa plush,
And with my glowing toddy, and the steam
Of women sweating in their gowns: tired, lustful.

Clouds of tobacco smoke were wavering through
The laughter and the haggling cries and shrieks
Of painted women and the men they drew.
The rattling at the sideboard of the spoons
Cheered on the hubbub of the mart of love
Uninterrupted like a tambourine.

I sate with eyes fixed on the corridor,
That cut the long room in its middle length,
And listened to the gaslight's laboured talk

In yellow language from the chandeliers
With the colours of the faces round the table,
Whose sable marble laughed a polished laugh.

I was about to choose, when, where I sate,
The crimson curtain of the door was split,
And a fresh couple entered. A cold draught
Cut through the heated room, and some one swore;
But through the crowd the pair stepped noiselessly.
Over against me at the transverse end
Of the corridor, whence they could sweep the room,
They took their seats. The chandelier of bronze
Hung o'er them like an awning heavy, old.
And no one seemed to know the couple, but
At my right hand I heard a hoarse voice pipe:
"I must have come across the pair before."

He sat quite still. The loud gray of the air
Almost recoiled before his callous brow,
Which wan as wax rose into his sparse hair.
His great pale eye-lids hung down deep and shut,
On both sides lay around his sunken nose
Their shadows, and through his thin beard shone
the skin.

And only when the woman at his side,
Less tall than he, and of a lissom shape,
Hissed, giggling, in his ear some obscene word,
Half rose of one black eye the heavy lid,
And slowly round he turned his long, thin neck,
As when a vulture lunges at a corpse.

And silent and more silent grew the room;
All eyes were fixed upon the silent guest,
And on the woman squatted strange to see.
"She is quite young"—a whispering round me went;

And with a child's greed she was drinking milk.
Yet almost old she seemed to me, whenever
Her tongue shot through a gap in her black teeth,
Her pointed tongue out of her hissing mouth,
While her gray, eager glance took in the room;
The gaslight in it shone like poisonous green.

And now she rose. He had not touched his glass;
A great coin lit the table. She went out;
He automatically followed her.
The crimson curtain round the door fell to,
Once more the cold draught shivered through the
heat,
But no one cursed. Through me a shiver ran.

I did not choose a partner—suddenly
I knew them: it was Syphilis and Death.

VENUS REGINA.

I DREAMED, and yet I knew that I was dreaming,
And I was dreaming that a Queen had died.
Bare-headed, mourners few and chosen, we
Stand in a great room sultrily hemmed in
By gloomy ring of sandstone pillars old,
And by the balsam odour the corpse breathes.
And by the iron-wrought sarcophagus
Stands the bowed King; the dome of glass above
Winnows a fallow light, which glints upon
His youthful locks and the sarcophagus,
And in the open vault faints at his feet.
The King weeps. And his tears, slow, one by one,
Flash on the coffin's iron rim, and roll;
The stone floor of the chamber drains the drops.

And on the lid as in a dream I read:
 Nay, I am nowise dreaming, clear I see,
 In great, gray iron characters I read:
 REGINA SEMPITERNA MORTUA—
 O-strange; the ever-living Queen is dead.
 How well-belovèd hath this consort been!
 I hear in wonderment how all we sing,
 I singing also:

 Happily mourn
 They that are noble a noble life.
 Never is lost what hath once been rife;
 Soon as thy sorrow thou hast forsaken,
 Yearning will strain to that ultimate bourne,
 And re-awaken
 What hath been taken.

Now hath the young King reared his head erect.
 He turns him round. It is an Emperor. Yea:
 I do not dream: it is a German Kaiser,
 In coronation robes. Nay: but it is:
 Surely I dream? Indeed, thou art my friend,
 My friend that once in tatters perished poor,
 In debt and infamy, an Emperor now—
 Nay, I dream not, myself, I am the monarch.
 I beckon. And my nobles come, and raise
 And sink my Dearest down into the tomb.
 I hear the stretched ropes gliding, as I stand
 Turned from them, yet not weeping, but to lend
 A hand myself, I could not, no indeed.
 O let me look not on it, no more smell
 This odour of embalment—sing the song,
 I cannot listen to the torturing noise,
 I *will* not sob! Yet with them all I sob,
 The vault is sobbing:

Blessèd the being,
They that are free say, in its freeing.
Whoso liveth is life's warm lover.
Learn with spirits to soar and hover.
When thou art risen
Into their ether out of thy prison,
Thou from thy grief wilt recover.

And master of myself I grow. My heart
For light is longing. And while the deadened hall
Behind me echoes, into the fresh, free air
I step, and reel! The azure heavens of noon
Dazzle me till I close my eyes, and, deafening,
An acclamation myriad voices raise
Storms on my ear, my breath halts, I remember,
Now I can see it in my jubilant people,
And yesterday an edict I decreed:
"My land shall honour *joyfully* its dead."
Such was Her will—again they cry in glee.
This is the festival of Spring. A wood
Of terraced lindens underneath me waves,
Fresh sprouting, like a field with glinting green.
And I descend, where through the blackish coil
Of branches gleams the turbulent festival,
And meadows shimmer. All the linden leaves
Seem filled with whir of white doves; a May scent
Stirs up and makes delicious the warm air.
But doves can fly not in such wavy lines—
Nay, these are swirls of blossoms. Lilac snow,
An ocean of white lilac blossoms whirls
Among the exulting masses. And I mark:
They lay hold of and let each other go,
And in the dance reach garlands each to each,
And, striding towards the odour, I perceive:
They are quite nakèd! Nay: their limbs exhale

A light that folds them in as might a veil
 Transparent close. Round neck and wrists gleam jewels.
 Their shoulders shadowed are by tender wings
 O tender ! great as are in faery tales
 The wings of butterflies or petals of flowers;
 And they that have blonde hair have blue effulgence,
 They that are brown, fire-red—but nowhere black.
 So dance my people, flourishing lilac boughs,
 Honouring the will of My Dear Lady dead,
 And see me pace with pace as in a dream,
 And every heart exults. And on a lawn
 A bevy of maidens round a gushing spring
 Singing are walking :

Comforting blisses
 Hold Life in hiding in Death's dark places.
 Knowledge makes sorrow.
 When I was nestled in his embraces,
 Under his kisses,
 We had forgot yesterday and to-morrow.

My coronation robe oppresses me.
 Out of the youths and maidens radiates
 A warmth far warmer than the sunbeams—Strange !
 From troop to troop I pass them in review,
 My people, and I find no age but youth.
 From lawn to lawn my anxious heart holds muster :
 For Spring is surely also for the old !
 But, as I see, the old have stayed at home,
 Grumbling, may be, in closeness of dim rooms,
 It seems they do not know my Emperor's heart.
 O all my youths, sing louder ! ye indeed
 Honour the will of Our Dear Lady dead—
 O louder ! And the lime-leaves quiver in
 The chorus of the men :

Rapture lavish is,
Time it ravishes,
Living is laughing with wounds that are bleeding.
When she looked at thy happy loins lying
Seemed to be dying,
This for your hell was the heaven you were needing.

And warmer grows their radiance, warmer still,
My coronation robes oppress me more,
The heat consumes me. I must rest awhile ;
I will forsake the festival ! Already
The rainbow wings far in the green die out ;
My shoulders pain me, endless seems the park.
The trees grow denser, to a forest grow ;
I come into a glade of birches old,
I breathe at ease. Here the bright joy arrives
Only as sacred rustling of tree-tops,
Scarce louder than the brook, which, murmuring,
Escorts me. Deeper sinks the valley down,
And bends around a jutting rock, the stream
Trickles away in stones to silver threads,
Which like a song—no : like a voice they sound—
The valley grows a gorge. A whirlpool, strewn
With ambient birchen shadows, blinks below ;
A bridge above it bends, and on the railing
Two of the naked maidens lean in gloam
Threaded by sun-rays. Singing the blonde one lets
The spray begem her hair, I listen to her,
I tremble—do I dream ?—she sees me, both
See me and sing :

Start not and shiver !
Only the heart is dark.
The deep is a pleasure-giver ;
This from the lavish liver
Thou from the waterfall mark.

No, not a dream ! no : my sweet terror is life,
 And your young voices live, both ye are living !
 But thou that hast the colours of the sky,
 Thou hast the voice of My Dear Lady dead ;
 My comfort, as She promised, thou shalt be !—
 Yea, she expecteth me : she beckons, comes.
 I see now, how the shimmer of her breasts
 Between the birches rises and is hidden.
 Already shine against the silver boles
 Her neck, and turquoise necklace, and her arm,
 Her gait, and the ruby necklace of the other.
 Gentle as taken breathings fall and rise
 Their blue of heaven and red of hell of wings.
 I see the lights already of her eyes—
 I see them, see them, and again the sweet
 Fear of my heart into my temples shoots,
 For thou, O thou there with the eyes of brown,
 Thou hast the eyes of Our Dear Lady dead,
 The comfort that She promised thou shalt be !—
 Now they have joined together hand with hand,
 And stand below, and beckon me to them ;
 Down to them, downwards, I ! They flee ; I pant.
 And through the stream they swim to the other
 shore.

I in my coronation robes spread out
 My arms, their bright laugh rings back in my face,
 They stand and sing :

Can'st thou soar ?
 Out of the gloam
 Where loneliness brews at its own rapt core
 Strengths that foam,
 Life to the games calls home
 Hearts that are fettered no more.

They turn about, and will abandon me,
They climb back to the gorge, back to the games.
They break from bushes boughs, and as they walk
With these they crown their hair—O tarry ! stay !
My feet are not so fleet ! The waterfall !
Too far the bridge ! My coronation robes,
My heavy coronation robes, O stay !
I cast them off, there lie they ! *O how light*
A naked man breathes !—Round my neck and chest
The water foams. I have attained the shore,
I shall overtake you. They flee. More quickly I.
I hear a rustling at my back : I too
Am wingèd. Sweeping strong, with two-fold hues,
In flames of blue of heaven and red of hell,
Me on the blonde maid drive my pinions two,
I lay hold of her. I—both I must have,
Thee with the brown eyes I will also have !
Now ! No ! The blonde maid has escaped. They both
Exulting join hands. Exultant cries
Acclaim my chase : song : blossom-swaying comes
To meet us dancing all the festival.
Now : between my finger-tips—indeed :
Here brown, here blonde, their flying hair—and now :
I hold both of them . . . ah . . . I am awake. ,

THE MAID.

IN all the fields the flowers sprang ;
He looked at me with sad, tired eyes.
In the black alder the nightingale sang :
The blossom dies ! the blossom dies !
The night with odours was so hot,
As blood so hot, hot as our blood ;

And we were young, and joy we had not.
And over us in the bush the song,
The sobbing song : fire flames not long !
And he so true to me, and good.

A bud was every poppy head,
The sun above us sucked our sweat.
Now the buds were growing red,
My cheeks were growing whiter yet.
For our dear bread, our sweet bread flowed
Doubly hot in the corn his sweat.
The wild poppy fire-red glowed ;
Was it his sweat's cursed venom bite
That made his cheeks as mine so white ?
And the sun struck him dead as he mowed.

In the wet wind the asters pale
Were shaking ; and the blue grape glowed.
The reaping-women hissed a tale ;
The apple-tree the brown grass strewed.
The day was sated so with rain
As once his eyes with tired pain ;
The asters pale stood wetted in
The mist ; and full of scorn and hate
They drove her out at the farm-yard gate
Into the fog, the maid of sin.

Now blooms with ice the forest bald,
My tears freeze in the cutting wind.
From bright panes shines His tree who called
Unto His breast all those that sinned.
The hungry sparrow cheeps and cheeps
From roof to roof ; the crow croaks thin.
At my limp breasts my baby weeps,
And there is none will let us in.

Like the sharp words a rich man speaks,
Beneath my feet the hard snow creaks.

The cry bores in my ear its way :
Thou child of shame ! thou outcast one !
Thou wage of sin ! and yet they pray
To the child of the Maid, to the Virgin's Son.
O, burns my blood. What have I done ?
Was it not sin, that she too bore ?
My Child, my Saviour, weep no more ;
A bed for thee, thy blood for me,
Falls silver-clear from the sky above.
It is so sweet to dream in the snow.
What have I done ?—So sweet. So sore.
Was it not love ?—Was it—not—love—

THE LABOURER.

We have a bed, and a baby too,
My wife !
We have work besides, we have work for two,
And we have the sun, and the wind, and the rain,
And we only need one little thing more,
To be as free as the birds that soar :
Only time.

When we go through the fields on the Sunday morn,
My child,
And far and away o'er the bending corn,
We see the swarming swallows flash,
Then we only need a bit of a dress,
To have the birds' bright loveliness :
Only time.

The storm is gathering black as jet,
 Feel the poor.
 Only a little eternity yet ;
 We need nothing else, my wife, my child,
 Except all things through us that thrive,
 To be bold as the birds through the air that drive :
 Only time !

IIARVEST SONG.

THERE stands a field of golden sheaves,
 To the very edge of the world it heaves.
 Grind, mill, grind !

The wind falls in the wide land,
 Many mills at the sky-edge stand.
 Grind, mill, grind !

There comes a sunset dark and red,
 Many poor people are crying for bread.
 Grind, mill, grind !

The night holds in its lap the storm,
 To-morrow the men to work will swarm.
 Grind, mill, grind !

Clean are the fields swept, never again
 A man shall cry in hunger-pain.
 Grind, mill, grind !

THREATENING PROSPECT.

THE sky is whirling, the land flies fast ;
 And while, by the express shocked and shaken,
 Furrow on furrow whizzes past,
 Thee thy shivering limbs awaken :
 The sun of morning comes.

Through the hung mist with toiling wings
Break herded crows that autumn is thinning,
While thick upon the dugged field clings
The smoke of workshops just beginning ;
The sun of morning comes.

Under the trailing gray crape lies
A chain of slag-heaps filling acres,
Chimney on chimney scales the skies,
Standing by coffins fearsome wakers ;
The sun of morning comes.

Along the rapid landscape rolls
A pair of road-dikes from the horizon,
Framed in by gnarled and weathered holes
Of apple-trees a pale sheen lies on ;
The sun of morning comes.

Now sweeps thy gaze the opposite verge,
Where boughs, of fruit despoiled, are showing,
And suddenly tree on tree they surge,
With crumpled leafage fire-red glowing :
The day is there.

THE HARP.

THE pinewood, looming black, stands ill at ease ;
Black storm-clouds race, and blacker storm-clouds
follow.
The rooks fly soundless swift home o'er the trees ;
Out of brown branches angry sounds ring hollow,
And hollower rings my step.

Hills ! ye are yet as when I wandered lone,
 Or ever yearning's tempest took and tore me,
 Or ever, at your world-primeval tone,
 I stretched imploring hands to the grandeur o'er me,
 Ye giant trunks around.

Wide-spread, scarce stirring in the forest deeps,
 Soar the high trunks that now are gray and stricken ;
 Strong through their green-remaining crowns there sweeps
 The weight of noisy forces yet that quicken,
 Even as of yore.

And one on high, hand of an earth-god, shoots
 Five mighty fingers split and growing riven,
 Still shining golden-brown from top to roots,
 And higher yet upon the skies hath striven
 Than the stark lone stems.

A fight in these five fingers never ends,
 As though to meet they struggled hard and panted ;
 A cramp plays music as their crests it rends,
 As they were tearing at the strings enchanted
 Of some wild harp.

And from the harp there comes of Heaven a tone,
 Which mightily from east to west is winging ;
 A tone that I from youth have deeply known :
 Hollow the wood out of brown branches is ringing :
 Come, tempest, do my will !

O how for some strong hand I yet have yearned,
 That well should fit my own hand when I clasped it !
 How have I stretched my fingers till they burned !
 My whole hand, no hand hath ever grasped it !
 And then I clenched my fist.

I have, with wild desires of every kind,
Tossed between God and beast, a heart unruly—
And when I stand, and scan the road behind,
Only one love can be endured truly :
For the whole world.

Come, thou Almighty's storm, shake the stark trees !
Thy first-world force shakes not the forest only.
The rooks to nest are flying ill at ease ;
Give me the power, yet to be lonely,
World !—

THE CRITIC.

The critic, it is true, can never err,
No more than can the woodpecker.
In the wildest storm the oak stands firm,
In its trunk the woodpecker finds the worm.

DOLOROSA,

b. 1879.

THE ELEVATION.

AND silence reigned around. . . . The last long tone
Of the triumphal Sanctus softly died. . . .
And lowly kneeling by the altar-stone
I for the Elevation did abide.

And in the glare that from the altar glowed
A priest pale as a lily stood and prayed ;
The chasuble from his youthful shoulders flowed
In heavy pliant folds of gold brocade.

His pallid brow in adoration bent,
Bright in one filtered sunbeam tall he stood,
Then, rapt, on high he raised the Sacrament :
"Take all of ye—this is my flesh and blood !"

And on me was the radiance of his light,
I burned with bright love in the minster dim,
And trembling hid my face, ecstatic, white,
And prone upon my knees I worshipped him.

H. W. and J. B.

GUSTAV FALKE,

b. 1853.

DEVOUT.

THE moon illumines my pillow,
I do not sleep,
My hands in the kiss of the moonbeams
Folded I keep.

My soul, from God returnèd,
Lies now at rest,
And my heart has one thought only :
To make thee blest.

GUSTAV FALKE.

THE POPPY FIELD.

ONCE on a time, I know not where,
I know not when. A dream, may be.
Out of a pine wood, unaware,
I stepped upon a quiet lea.

And on the quiet meadow I
Saw all around a carpet spread,
Far as the line where land meets sky,
Of motionless blown poppies red.

And on the blood-red carpet lay,
Regarded of a thousand flowers,
A lovely, tired summer day
In first sleep of the sunset hours.

No breath. No sound. A bird in flight
The air of evening scarce does cleave.
I scarcely see his stretched wings smite,
A black line in the fragrant eve.

Once on a time, I know not when.
Long, long ago. A dream, may be.
But I can see it now as then,
The silent, purple poppy-sea.

STRAND-THISTLE.

THE lady walked by the ocean strand
O'er the white sand at the fall of day,
Till a shy red flower stood in her way,
She plucked it, and cast it out of her hand.

She bent down to the gray, forlorn,
Tall thistle that beside it stood.
But this was clad in hardihood,
And through her frail hand drove its thorn.

But she brake it, and walked, and sang a lay,
With tired mouth a tired lay she sang,
Over the darkening bay it rang,
And on the salt wind died away.

FAIRY TALE.

O LOVE, when thou art near me,
How happy then I grow !
I am once again the boisterous
Boy of the long ago.

And this is what the sunny
Breath of thy youth can do.
I love thee so ! In the garden
The roses are blooming too.

O dream of the old days golden !
Heart, once upon a time.
Over the vale of my childhood
Clouds wander at evening chime.

BEHIND THE DIKE.

BEHIND the dike, you remember, sweet,
Behind the dike the sunny seat ?
Over the broom, over the swaying
Oats the butterflies are playing.

Now and then a keen shrill cry,
A sea-gull flits and flashes by.
Once too, somewhere out of sight,
Oars that echo hollow smite.

Behind the dike, from people far,
Little sea-pinks star by star.
Little sea-pinks rising round us
Into nosegays sweet we bound us.
Great big children, I and you ;
Merry rang our laughter too,
Till we puckered up our brow :
Dare we be such children now ?

THE FOOLISH HUNTER.

To capture fortune out he strode,
And hunted hard with cheeks that glowed
 Until the evening candles burned.
But all his hunting was in vain,
Foiled and weary he again
 Into his cosy cot returned.

There at the hearth a maiden mild,
An eye-sore to the hunter wild,
 In simple working-dress he sees.
His ample supper she prepares,
Her busy hand she nothing spares
 To set the tired man's limbs at ease.

A year before he in his cot
Had found her, and, though he asked her not,
 She stayed, and he her service took.
Now at his feet she cowered pale,
He punished her for the wasted trail
 Of the quarry over hill and brook.

“And though I hunt myself to death,
Hunt I will till my last breath,”
 He raved with stubborn heart aflame;
And, sullen, turned on her his back,
To follow still the mazy track
 Through dreamland wilds of that shy game.

In the morning, ere the birds' first cheep,
Awake was he. Still drunk with sleep
 His glance strayed where he saw her stand
On the hearth-stone. In the fire's light
She stood, pale on the hearth-stone white,
 The maid, her bundle in her hand.

“Whither away?” “What carest thou?
My service is another's now.
 I never shall return, good-bye.”
Out of the door she passed, he heard,
And scarce conceived her parting word:
 “ Forget me not, Fortune was I.”

THE WAVE.

LIKE sheep before the wolves, before the shrilly
North storm the waves are scudding white with fear,
Or as wild horses, leaving colt and filly,
 With the prairie burning after them career.

Nay, women with their hair in wild disorder
Close crowded round their queen they seem to be,
That with their naked bodies hide and ward her
From the bold Viking risen from the sea.

And in their midst the sudden robbers spy her,
Blanched is her face with boding of the rape ;
In her own country, where they durst defy her,
A fugitive, she hopes not to escape.
The victor's sea-horn rings out clearer, redder,
Which way? Which way, before the certain doom ?
Laughing he soon into the dust will tread her,
And her death-bed will be his bridal-room.

Still on and on ! With arms robust she pushes
Her serving-women crazed with fear aside,
With freer foot, unhindered, on she rushes,
As though she saw escape beyond the tide.
But the swift hunter knows for what he raided,
She feels his hot breath touch her as she flees,
And by her long wet tresses come unbraided
He drags the exhausted woman to her knees.

She totters, falls, before the strong sea-rover
Stretches her limbs, he sees the fast heart beat ;
And, to assuage his fury, staggers over
Love's soft white cushions lying at his feet.
A scream of shame. A purple struggle. Sated
The savage. Conquest on the conquered thrust.
A noble queen is vilely violated,
Her sigh is smothered in the moan of lust.

GUSTAV FALKE.

PRISONED.

OUT of a narrow, mazy wilderness
I sought an exit, but, at the way's end,
There stood with a forbidding gesture: I.
Not violent, but forceful. With so calm
A scrutiny I fixed my glance upon
Myself, that seized with terror back I stepped,
And slowly from the horror fled away.

Ambition, pride, untruthfulness, lust, hate,
And envy, every passion bore my features,
And frightened me. Grief too, and pain of love
And pale repentance sighing torture dead,
And madness with its blear and lightless eyes.
Gatekeepers many as the many gates
Leered with a voiceless "Back" into my face.

But then I came on a shy youth at guard.
Shame covered him his tender cheeks when he
Beheld me coming. And his mien, methought,
Spoke humbly: Forgive me thou that here I stand.

Then seized me rage: Poor mask, and art thou I?
Thou coward, thou piteous shadow let me pass,
And suddenly into his temples shot
A deeper purple, and unto my rebuke
He raised bewildered eyes. I raised my fist.
Then pale as death he laid hold of my arm,
And his eyes uttered, shouted: Strike me not!
But I in anger wrestled with him, wrestled
Three days and three nights long, and threw him not,
Till spent I let him go, and step by step
Retreated from him gaze in gaze. But his

Full of dishevelled shame and still reproach.
And I crept underneath a bush to hide,
And there my watchmen followed me, and spied
Through the swart foliage, resolute to encroach,
And tortured me.

ARTHUR FITGER,

b. 1840—d. 1909.

EVENING PRAYER.

“DAUGHTER, how the door is creaking,
In the dead of night it shakes!”—
Mother o’ mine, the wind is shrieking,
Never mind the noise it makes.
On the window beats the rain.
Lie you still,
And I will
Read the evening prayers again.

Ye daughters of Jerusalem, give heed!
Hark to my friend’s feet coming o’er the mead.
I hear his feet o’er the dark meadow tripping,
With nightly dew his locks are dripping.

“Daughter, some one’s in the house!
To the stairs I hear him creeping.”—
Mother, it’s the little mouse
Nibbling, or the cricket cheeping.
On the window beats the rain.
Lie you still,
And I will
Read the evening prayers again.

Ye daughters of Jerusalem, my friend
Comes from the orchard where the blue grapes
 bend,
From where the brown fig is to purple grown,
He comes, seeks, longs to be with me alone.

“ Daughter, are there ghosts that haunt thee?
 Soft feet in thy room I hear.”—
Mother, ghosts will never daunt me:
 There will be an angel near.
On the window beats the rain.
 Lie you still,
 And I will
Read the evening prayers again.

O friend, beloved, loveliest and best,
My heart beats loud and louder in my breast;
All eyes now sleep, there shines no candle-ray:
Watchmen of Zion, ye will not betray.

CÄSAR FLAISCHLEN,

b. 1864.

LEAVES FROM A DIARY.

I.

ON the heights of life
Thou thoughtest
In eternities to plunge
Thy drunken eye . . .

And seest
Only more deep
Of all the doings
The shallowness
Without a kernel . . .
On the heights of life !

But this knowledge also
Is . . . victory !

II.

Although indeed hours come in which thou art
Conscious of what thou never yet hadst felt:
Like a grey rain it rains into thy heart,
And thou wilt stand, and like a beggar shy,
Through hedges peep which thou art hidden by,
Where, gossiping and laughing as they sit,
Are cheerful people in their cheerful garments . . .
They chat and laugh, they sing and kiss
 With blood so light,
 With soul so bright:

As if there were not all the troublous things,
On which thy strength is spent without avail !
As if the fight, thy theme and thought,
And all the care and toil, were . . . naught !
Cobwebs of an idle brain,
All this thy task and pain !
Yea, even as if all those who, glad as children, sit,
And sing and play, and dance and kiss, had long
 been filled
With what to thee seemed ultimate reward,
The crowning thanks for years of strife and effort . . .

And like a grey rain in thy heart it rains,
And like a beggar thou must slink from thence
Lonely
Thy lonely way.

III.

And yet:
Nay, I envy you not ! . . .
Bright is my heart, bright are my eyes,
And in the golden sunshine lies
The sweet world with its summer sights,
Glittering clouds gliding over the heights . . .
And deeper and deeper the valleys sink,
And far below me roll
All things crushing, and crashing, and loud,
All that is bounded, and sorrow-bowed.

MOST QUIETLY AT TIMES.

Most quietly at times and like a dream
In thee re-echoes a far distant song . . .
Thou knowest not whence suddenly it came,
Thou knowest not what it would have of thee . . .
And like a dream most peacefully and still
It dies in distant music, even as it came . . .

As suddenly as in the crowded street,
And in the very winter's frozen heart,
An odour of roses will around thee breathe,
Or as a picture unawares will rise
From far-forgotten happy childhood's days,
And gaze at thee with eyes inquisitive . . .

Most quietly, and lightly as a dream . . .
Thou knowest not whence suddenly it came,
Thou knowest not what it would have of thee,
And like a dream most peacefully and still
It pales and passes, fading whence it came.

ON SHORT AND SIORTER DAYS.

ON short and shorter days the rain-clouds sink a heavier
burden, and the sun but shows to blink.
Yesterday I saw a bunch of roses at the forest's hem . . .
Give me thy hand, and come . . . and we will gather
them . . .
They will be the last, I think !

TANDARADEI.

"He and I and a little bird,
Tandaradei !
Tells not what it saw and heard !"

—WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE.

COME, come !

We will ask the cuckoo in the forest, he knows . . .
And play with the gold rings in the ferns. Out of the
big ones we will make wreaths, and all the little ones I
will put on your sweet little fingers . . .

And then we will run after the sunbeam which is
teasing the roses yonder . . . the sunbeam will show us
the way . . .

And behind the firs in the purple heather we will
nestle close, so very close and quiet . . .

And make merry over the old woman of the forest,
who would like to find us . . .

And the bluebells will ring us to marriage. . . .

No one will know . . . only the cuckoo and the blue-
bells, and they won't tell anybody !

SIN.

WE loved one another, and we both knew it, and the
beach lay quiet in the loneliness of evening . . . only an
old fisherman was sitting round the bend of the path
mending nets . . .

And we watched the swallows skimming round their
nests on the top of the cliff . . .

And we sat at the edge of the field gazing into the
dusk, and neither of us could find another word to
say. . . .

And your eyes grew stranger and stranger, and more
and more impatiently the wind tugged at your fair
hair, and more and more full of yearning grew our
silence . . .

And we loved one another, and we knew it well,
and we knew that it was the last day for months, and
perhaps forever and ever, and . . . that we should be
stealing nothing from anybody

And . . . we did not . . . kiss !

Was it not a sin ?

Was it not . . . folly ?

IRENE FORBES-MOSSE,

b. 1864.

THE GRATED GARDEN.

WHEN I was young, and full of fear, and lonely,
When didst thou take me to thy heart,
Into thy heart's mild fire,
And thou didst take my feet into thy lap,
And stroke them till I slept.
Now thou art still, and ill, and very lone,
And I will stroke thy hands,
And sit before the glowing fire,
And think of the roses red, so red:
So deeply they hung down
Over the wall,
Where the secret garden was.

Was the wicket, in those days, too rusty?
Or were our hands too weak?
For we would stare through the grating's iron
curls,
Gazing on great trees in blossom,
Sounding butterflies,
And on green basins with their fountains gone to
sleep,
Where from the stream-god's slimy beard
Trickled the dampness on his mossy breast. . . .
And we would nod to one another, thinking:
In there, beloved, see how silent it is and sweet !

We could not stay, we roamed the burning road,
Where white and strong the patient oxen drew,
—Their breath was sweet like meadows of our childhood—

And the crickets in the ditch
Besought an alms,
The swarthy gipsy children of the summer.

But further went the highway,
And out of my existence thou wert lost.
But when I found thee again,

O thou my heart,
We smiled, and caught breath deeply,
And in our thoughts
Rose up the secret garden:
Endless whispering of roses ! . . .

WITHOUT REST.

I LAID me on a bed of snowy eider,
And over me, hung on the blackened rafter,
She span her web, the old, bad, magic spider.

I lay out on the blue-blown heather prairie,
Where honey-heavy bees were humming round me,
And yet my grief was ever wake and wary.

I lay on sheaves thrown down in pillow fashion,
I plaited garlands out of half-shed poppy :
Ah, red and yellow are the dyes of passion.

I laid me in the beechen holt, where sicken
The russet leaves, and lightning lit the tree-tops,
To fear a storm my heart is too sore stricken.

I lie on road-side moss and stones, for stronger
Than I is love, now must thou surely find me,
And say : Rise up, thou art alone no longer.

GREY.

GOWNS of soft grey I now will wear,
Like willow trees all silvery fair :
 My lover, he loves grey.
Like clematis, with silky down,
Which lend the dew-sprent hedge a crown :
 My lover, he loves grey.

Wrapped in a dream, I watch where slow
Within the fire the wood-sparks glow :
 My love, thou art away . . .
The soft grey ashes fall and shift,
Through silent spaces smoke-clouds drift,
 And I too, I love grey.

I think of pearls, where grey lights dream,
Of alders, where the mist-veils gleam :
 My love, thou art away . . .
Of grey-haired men of high renown,
Whose faded locks were hazel brown,
 And I, too, I love grey.

The little grey moth turns its flight
 Into the room, allured by light :
 My lover, he loves grey.
 O little moth, we are like thee,
 We all fly round a light we see
 In swamp or Milky Way.

H. F.

FIRST DAYS OF SPRING.

WHITE, O white is the way, and the sunny dust
 upheaves,
 Powdering the budding hedges, shaken by wheels
 and feet,
 Sideways whispers the forest of many a twilight
 retreat,
 Green O green is the grass under the rustling leaves.
 Heavy O heavy my heart when the clouds are sailing
 serene,
 Even as sand through my fingers the days are
 slipping and flying . . .
 Tell me, thou sprouting green, tell me, ye oaks
 undying,
 Whom shall my leafage refresh ere the withering of
 my green?

PSYCHE AT THE GATE.

LET me in with silver veils,
 Let me in with golden shoes,
 Let me rest, while evening pales,
 In the maze's avenues ;

Let me from the virginal
Pain-related pleasure steal,
Evening spins her golden wheel . . .
Let me in on golden shoes !

Welcome me with garlands shed,
Welcome me with shoeless feet . . .
As the ponds o'er silverèd
Lapping sweet the grey walls greet,
So is rustling in my heart
My remembrance, and my spirit's
Yearning round the rosy turrets . . .
Let me in with shoeless feet.

AUTUMN MAGIC.

THE mists around the castle weave,
Where Love dwells with his kith and kin,
And through the greyness of the eve
From branch of fir to pine-branch spin
The webs of autumn gossamer
That elfin maids are married in.

And every lighted casement glows,
And festive strains of music sound,
The guests are seated in long rows,
And passing the filled horns around,
They came from countries far away,
Their hair with mistletoe is crowned.

Love's castle oriels beam and flash,
 The drawbridge yet is raised on high,
 The gate wreathed with red mountain ash,
 Yet in the halls slinks malice by,
 The murdered bridegroom lies in reeds,
 With vacant upward-staring eye.

The bride hands round the honeyed mead,
 She gazes through the hoar-frost flake :
 "O come, my love, come now with speed !"
 Into the dark she peered and spake.
 She does not see the golden hair
 Between the lilies on the lake.

And shuddering through the wood I ride,
 By junipers and cowering bushes,
 The hoofs on hollow mosses slide,
 And dwarfs are lurking in the rushes . . .
 But men on yonder hill-side dwell,
 Where candle-light the darkness flushes.

I SATE IN NOON'S DEAD GLOW.

I SATE in noon's dead glow with fainting soul,
 And life all seemed so distant and so wan ;
 The gods dreamed round me, and the fountain stole
 A sound from silence, whispering : "Drink, be whole !
 I am the waters of oblivion."

I sate in night with visions backward sent
 To far-flown days when youth could play and dance ;
 I saw the silvery ripples moon-besprent :
 "Drink not, drink not, O ye with fever rent !
 I am the waters of remembrance."

ALBERT GEIGER,

b. 1866.

SONG OF THE BUDS.

O THAT the dark, dark nights would come,
The dark nights moisture-breathing,
The sweet dark nights with tepid dew,
And take from us our sheathing !

At every eve a virgin comes—
O she must surely love us !—
And the trembling pearls of her little can
She pours with care above us.

She leans her face so fair and pale,
With mother-love a-thirsting !
“Of all the many, many buds
Is none yet open bursting?”

O that the dark, dark nights would come,
The dark nights moisture-breathing,
The sweet, dark nights of tepid dew,
And take from us our sheathing !

YE BLESSÈD MOONS OF MY NIGHTS.

YE blessèd moons of my nights,
Breasts belovèd,
How through the dark ye shimmer
In pale, pale beauty !

Still upon you trembles
A breath of yearning immortal,
And fragrant dew,
The moisture of my lips and eyes,
Kisses sobbing consummation,
Tears from rapture risen
Moisten you still,
Breasts belovèd.

O ye, my beautiful homeland,
Homeland of shy desire,
That flees the day,
And walks at evening
With trembling feet,
With eyes fear closes
Into the land of freedom—
O ye, belovèd breasts,
Ye blessèd moons of my nights.

Ye blessèd moons of my nights,
Rounded softly
Ye nestle close to my fondling lips,
And still ye murmur gently
Of creation's secret,
Of the night of the world primeval
That bore the rosy trembling light,
Of the might of the mist resplendent,
Which rounded itself
Gently to pendent suns and moons,
When gently swelling
Rang out the sacred anthem of beauty.

FOREST IDYLL.

THE pleasantest thing for a boy and a maid,
When the summer day is oppressing,
Is to lie beneath the hedge caressing,
Where the raspberries scent the shade.

Outside the hedge the sun's hot rays
Are seeking the rascally runaways,
The truants who sit where the coolness drips,
Plucking berries from bushes and lips.
O when you are merry how quick the time passes !
And they throw themselves down among the high
grasses.

The grasses close, together gliding
Above us. We are safe in hiding.

THE DYING MAIDEN.

MOTHER, mother dear, with every day
Further from my bed the sun is stealing.
Very soon there will not be a ray
Come to make me dream that I am healing.
Leaf by leaf is from the wild vine tost,
Even so my hopes are loosed and scattered,
Now the garden flowers, nipped by the frost,
Red, and blue, and white, are lowly shattered.
Once again, before the last lights fade,
Ere, like me, all things are cold and sickly,
Out once more to field and forest glade !
But it must be quickly, must be quickly. . . .

There are days now of such gracious pain,
Colours O so wonderful and chastened !
Sunshine thin, and like a pale-gold rain,
Over holt and meadow westward hastened.
O my body, thou that tiredly starvest,
Fain wert thou in dying flowers to rest,
Fain were I to snatch from heavens of harvest
All pale melting roses to my breast.
Once again before the last lights fade,
Ere, like me, all things are cold and sickly,
Out once more to field and forest glade,
But it must be quickly, mother . . . must be
quickly.

TWO PICTURES OF MARY.

1.

MARY sits on the arbour seat,
A bud of a red rose ray.
Her heart is full of pain so sweet,
Which fain would something say.
And gentle hymns God showers
Through the elder flowers—
Dim feeleth Heaven's bride
The things that shall betide.

Dim forebodings now she hears,
The world drives home its will;
She lifts her eyes that fill with tears,
And lo ! there standeth still

An angel, brooding o'er her,
Like silver reared before her.
To Mary speaketh he:
"Great joy shall hap to thee.

Most blessed among maids, I bring
Thee tidings of great joy!
O Mary, from thy womb shall spring,
For the world's weal, a boy;
Yea, thee hath God appointed
To bear the World's Anointed!"
She sighed, and nothing said,
But bowed her gentle head.

II.

Mary sits in the garden of flowers,
Tending the Child through the scented hours.

The garden is with summer fair,
His great eyes gaze into the air.

The flies around him hum, and she
Sings as she rocks him on her knee:

"Sleep, baby, sleep,
On the meadow graze the sheep.

Through the grass sheep black and white,
The pretty little flowers they bite.

One is thine, the lamb like snow,
Thy father will give it thee, I know.

Thou shalt lead it with a silken band,
And feed it with thy tiny hand.

Sleep, baby, sleep !
On the meadow graze the sheep."

Master Joseph lays his tools aside,
Looks on with a heart brim full of pride.

RED CARNATIONS.

IN the garden by the red carnations,
He first confessed his passion there.
Had he not spoken then, I should not
Be now in sorrow and despair.

Why did the red carnations lure me,
Sultry with scent that evening late?
What need had he just at that moment
To creep in at the garden gate?

Yours is the fault, you red carnations,
Bewildering my senses so !
O it was wrong to say yes to him,
But I could not, could not say no. . . .

In the garden by the red carnations
So many a day I hang my head ;
And while they wither I am thinking:
I wonder when I shall be dead.

OVER THE AMBER-YELLOW DESERT.

OVER the amber-yellow desert
More and more obliquely shoot
The blond-feathered darts of the sun.
The gloaming,
The short light sigh
Of the dying tropical day,
Melts in the gently shivering air.
On blackish pinions,
From the coloured edges of the sky,
Swims up the evening.
In his pinions
Hides he the night.

Night—night—
O thou balsam on burning eyes
Of wanderers strayed and weary!
Thou gentle music,
Luring shy sleep
To the butterfly field of dream!
Thou sweetest song
For waiting love's
Impatience fiery!
Now comest thou, now comest thou anigh,
And the earth trembles and stretches its limbs
Like a woman in voluptuous drowsiness.

Over the desert
Dances in wildering eddies
Ghostly dust.
It flies and spins
With ankles white.
And at the brim of the near oasis
Blue flames flickering mount

Into the cool, clear air.
Are they souls? Are they shadows?
Phantoms of life turned into colour,
That the thirsty desert sand imbibed,
And that now the coolness of the night
Frees from their prison of dust?
And listen, now through the silence
A sound is cradled,
And falls and sinks
In motion sweet, uneasy,
Loud, gentle,
Slow, more quick,
An Arab dancing-song.
Between four tones
Tireless rambles the strange music,
As a maiden locked in
Between the walls of the room
Walks up and down, to and fro,
And outside waits her lover.

Darker it grows, more silent—
Hushes also the song!
Quenched the blue flames.
The dust no more is seen.
From the black-blue sky
Flicker the stars,
As if through the rents and holes
Of Night's royal mantle older than earth
The greedy light were sifted.
Tufts of light
Ooze forth.
Under tufts of light
Is sleeping now the tired wild beast: the
World.

Out of the darkness
Creeps a shape.
A gazelle
Peers trembling into the night,
Shies, stops, flees,
Comes back, grows bolder,
Bends her slender neck
To the right, to the left,
Hears a far-off menacing grumbling,
And shudders in every limb.
But there is the source !
She steps nearer,
She bends down,
She drinks—

Then over her,
With a mighty leap,
Magnificent monster,
The lioness—
Soundless ;
Clasped by giant paws as in a vice,
The frail gazelle is crushed--
The robber drags her prey
Over the sandy waste,
And the silent night
Knows no more of rapine.

Yea, and what happened to me?
What dream had I,
When short time gone on lonely couch
Thou fellest over me, Love,
O glorious lioness Love,
Thou Lioness Desire!

FRANZ KARL GINZKEY,

b. 1871.

THE POOR MAN'S DREAM.

OF late a lovely dream had he:
Now fortune hated him not.
He had found, beneath a forest tree,
A heavy, gold ingot.

At dead of night—at the stillest spot.
No leaf stirred.
He bore to the town the gold ingot.
Spake never a word.

And when to his leman's door he did win,
He lifted his voice and cried:
“Awake, my truelove, and let me in,
For ever to be my bride.”

And when she, beaming joyously,
In his embraces lay,
Awakened he, and naught could see,
Except the cold, grey day.

THE GRAVE.

I WALKED as a child at my father's hand
O'er beds of deep sandy pillows,
Where the patient dead rim the ocean strand
By the stamping and scraping billows.
Here and there we searched by the wave—
We could not find my mother's grave.

A little cross of brown tree-rind
 Once had set for a token.
 The simple cross we could not find,
 That it must have been stolen, or broken.
 We gazed around with sad emotion,
 And at last far out on the great, grey ocean.

Out of my hand my father took
 The roses brought for my mother,
 And these on the nameless mounds he shook
 That the drifted sea-sands smother.

A BLESSED END.

WHEN I in the grave am lying,
 I know not when or where,
 When I shall dust and mould be,
 A sweet hour is foretold me,
 I dreamed it full and fair.

Three snow-white cloudlets will gather,
 And sail like a sun-washed wave;
 They will come with a wind a-blowing,
 And gently waft me a glowing
 Gleam down into my grave.

Three maidens them will follow,
 Their beauty scarce that know;
 They will pluck from my grave the blossoms,
 Which, set in their budding bosoms,
 Will still be scented and blow.

Three travellers them will follow.
Afar their steps resound.
The bearded lads sing the golden
Song I sung in the olden
Days above the ground.

The maidens with bridal shyness
Will listen to the lay.
The lads will join them and rollick,
Three couples dance, and frolic
As round and round they sway.

My heart will hear, ere it crumbles,
As in the grave it lies,
The coupled marriage beatings,
Like last out-echoing greetings
Of a world that withers and dies.

VOICES IN SPRING.

CHORUS OF THE MEN:

WHAT'S Eve to us? Mostly a game,
A song, a summer dream that flies.
Once she was yearning's sweetest aim,
But yearning grew, and scaled the skies,
Hunting a star, and now the mind
Has left her standing far behind.
Yet we the woman still revere,
She bore to us our children dear.

CHORUS OF THE WOMEN:

What's Adam to us? Mostly a toy,
A picture we unveiled with pain.
We hoped from him so much of joy,
And what fulfilment did we gain?
He wanders after fame's bright star,
But from our love he dwells afar.
The heart he in his folly spurns
For comfort to his children turns.

TWO LOVERS TRUE:

Now breathes the spring with all delights.
The air is O so sweet and mild.
So close a bond our hearts unites,
And we are blest—without a child.
So was the spring two years ago,
When we the first time came to know,
How love from *mind* to *mind* is blown.
The soul is never then alone.

A TREE IN BLOSSOM:

What did they say—from mind to mind?
So love then is not fruit alone?
O blessedness, it is to find
A wealth of blossoms never strewn.
O human hearts, how rich are you!
Would I were like these lovers two!
Then all the year my flowers would bloom,
And fall not in the winter gloom.

ERNST HARDT,

b. 1876.

THE SPECTRE.

THE ashen feelers of the frigid morrow
Were groping at my forehead pale with sorrow,
And colder than these walls that round me stand.

Sleep fled from me, and ciphers half and whole
In phalanx upon phalanx chased my soul;
I raised my head and, horribly unmanned,

I glared upon a curling, crooked thing
A griffin shape down by thee cowering,
That held thy loved heart in a cruel hand,

And gnawed at it with teeth most steep and hard,
Until the cock's crow sounded from the yard,
Then fled it—and the young day scaled the land.

I pressed my fevered head and wept, undone,
I knew that also this made us as one,
The torture that is low and like a brand,

Which eats up nights and days and all our life.

OTTO ERICH HARTLEBEN,

b. 1864, d. 1905.

THE ADVENTURER.

HERE is the land. Row back and tell your crew :
My feet have trod the kingdom which is mine ;
They see me next as king, or nevermore.
Why stand ye yet and tarry, loth to go ?
Leave me alone with my good sword and steed—
I will enlist my company anew
Of stranger slaves to serve me on their soil.
I turn my back upon the fickle sea :
But ye, go back. Now sweeps mine eye the verge,
To find the strongholds where the coward lurks.

How ring my horse's hoofs on mouldered bones,
And skulls of men—have these by fate been strewn
To scare me on the threshold of my realm ?
Trample them down, and o'er them stride, black steed
Because they were not who I am they fell.

ODE OF LOVE.

WE fell asleep enchanted in love's arm.
The summer breeze the open casement held,
And listening caught the breathings of our peace,
And carried them out into the moonlit night.

And from the garden wavering stole its way
A scent of roses to our bed of love,
And gave us dreams delightful in our brains,
Intoxicated dreams—in yearning rich.

IN SILENT SUMMER AIR.

THE green and sun-bepainted gold of leaves—
I see it flashing still from thy white robe,
Still feel thy fondling hands upon my hair,
And the strong sweet smell of wild flowers all around.
What words were thine?—I do not hear thy voice,
I cannot call to mind its distant ring.
I am alone—and in my palm falls down
The green and sun-bepainted gold of leaves.

IT WAS THE FRAGRANCE STREAMING FROM THY HAIR.

It was the fragrance streaming from thy hair
That magically wrapped me like a cloud !
—I sate in thoughts deep-sunken in still nights,
And the thoughts scorched my forehead, and me-
seemed
There breathed towards and on me as I burned
A stranger breath from far-forgotten worlds.
I stretch my arms to clasp thee to my heart . . .
It was the fragrance streaming from thy hair.

A MONTHLY ROSE.

ONLY a monthly rose hath been the love
That dyed thy cheeks. I watched its withering,
Full of regret the keenest, and my tears
Have watered every petal as it fell,
Ere the wind took it. Thou hast robbed my eyes
Of that fair thing which was to them a salve,
And of its purpose thou hast robbed my life.

KARL HENCKELL,

b. 1864.

NOW SHADOWS DARK.

Now shadows dark the green earth dapple,
Only at times a hollow sound,
When from the laden boughs an apple
Tumbles upon the mossy ground.
I feel a soft refreshing wind blow
Warm from the orchard on my face,
But far I lean out of the window,
And mad thoughts in my spirit race.

Why all this doubting, this aspiring,
That fills my breast with torturing shame?
Why all this undeceived desiring,
That trembling runs through all my frame?
O heart, how forcefully thou beatest!
Thee overmans, delicious pain,
Of impulses the very sweetest:
To love and to be loved again.

The fever in my limbs grows stronger,
My strength is fast forsaking me :
I cannot, cannot bear it longer,
O harvest of love's husbandry !
In tears the wan moon seems to shimmer,
Behind the clouds I see her creep,
My eyes are growing dim and dimmer,
For thy dear sake I weep, I weep.

COME IN THE WOOD, MARIE !

COME in the wood, Marie !
Let thy bright laughter ring in sallies,
As we go through the dark pine-alleys.
To-day I am so full of ruth,
Thy laugh that rings as bold as youth,
Will do me good, Marie.

Sit in the moss, Marie !
To-day life's sunniest season holds
Me shrouded fast in cold mist folds,
And in thy lap I must be hiding
Lest ghosts come out of corners gliding
My path across, Marie !

Make me a nest, Marie !
And let me like a child cling to thee,
Then clammy ghosts will not undo me,
My soul's deep dark will do no ill
If thou but press me closely still
Upon thy breast, Marie !

PETER HILLE,

b. 1854, d. 1904.

VOICE OF THE FOREST.

How thy green-gold eyes are sparkling,
Forest, thou mossy dreamer !
How thy thoughts are darkling,
Hermit heavy with life,
Thou with the sap of thee sighing letting the days go by !

Over the swaying of the crowns
How it fetches breath and surges fuller, roaring enraged,
And passes—

And grows still—

Assuaged.

Over the swaying of the crowns
Stands high an earnest tone that had the ears
Already of a thousand years,
And yet a thousand years to it shall hark,
And ever this rustling strong and thundering dark.

SCHOOL-SNAKE.

IN the school-yard,
Arm in arm locking
The maidens are flocking,
Who with motley
Rings shall hotly
Squeeze and crush
Strong backs of men.

THE MAIDEN.

AWKWARD was she yesterday,
Pitiful, and poor, and grey,
Nothing to be seen in her.
Must be on her guard to-day,
As when blossoms snow in May,
Lest they all should blow away.

As there were a Queen in her,
As though God had, unawares,
Planted her in a garden of cares,
Blossoms delicate she bears.
There is courage keen in her,
Though upon the ground she stares

Because she is in blossoms rich,
Because the wind breaks blossoms which
Do not blush for dreams that sinned,
Are not full of innocence,
Caution, shyness, and pretence—
O foolish wind !

BEAUTY.

SAPPHO TO CHLOE.

FRIEND !
Poor, foolish blossom !
How thou shinest for him who
Dishevels thee, and withers thee.

Lo, such a man.
The thrall he is !
His doings loud and running.
Could we be so?
Only a woman walks.
She is, and beauty tarries thence,
Red little ears of curls are opened.

Scents my blood to thee as thine to me ?
No, Chloe.
It scenteth not.
Beauty thou knowest not, nor beauty's longing,
The seeking wind of the May of flowers,
Thou knowest it not.

Without a soul through me thou roamest.
Thou glowest hence to other haunts than I.
O fie for shame !
Thou my degenerated one !
How else could I feel thee, thou truant from me !

List : fortunate like to the gods seemeth the man
to me,
Who face to face with thee may sit quite near,
And listen into him thy chatter of twittering lips,
That sets the soul on fire.

THE MORN OF THE MARRIAGE NIGHT.

THE bud of the awakening swells,
Slumber is lightened tinted high with rose.
Tarryingly, rapturously timid,
Long, long.

Wide-open the listening soul.
 Was it, was it not?
 The horrifying fable,
 So gracious and so wild!
 A gentle glance steals round.
 Yea, there it is,
 And looks not after all so dangerous—
 And O how quietly it can breathe!
 As though nothing,
 Nothing, nothing had happened.
 Was *that* then so fearful,
 So shameless—and horrid,
 So compulsive—
 Caring for nothing.
 Possibly only the darkness made it so.
 This good, slumbering child,
 This slumbering peace

.

And stiff and stunned again she gazes upward,
 As the dead look on their land.

.

Now soon it will bestir itself the child,
 The child with the silk moustache.
 Somewhat tired, blessed stars
 Are quiet still in happiness astonished.
 Yes, that, that is love,
 Love deep with life and full of soul,
 So still, so intimately still,
 So with the plenary spirit galloping!
 Yea, the other thing—earlier—

.

Now one can have
The dear long night
In intimate power
Enchanting gifts,

.

Which one can offer the man,

.

And after the storming
Fury of darkness—
Gentleness tender and shy,
With a rogue lying under it hidden.
A soundless significant stealing away,
That, parted, one
May play and gambol,
While on the realm
Of the night's savagery
Sinks down bestowing peace.

.

Quenched the first greedy thirst
Of powers compelled to mingle
That govern life.

Torn

The magnetic net
Of the all-conceding night.
The tiredness delicious
Of second chastity
Rests in the silenced blood,
Until life's innate grace
Wins rising forces again,
And plays itself onward
To life's delightful music.

.

Now quietly somewhat of stillness,
Somewhat of a gentle enmity,
Till loving overflow
Bends and seeks,
And the soothing round of the eye
Turns to the thirsting dutiful mouth.

.
Swell peacefully onward then,
Ye long surging billows of life !
While of mutual strength the sap
United inwardly
Ripens into a new man,
The child of coalescent love.

.
Exult now with your young
Loving bodies
The soul is live in,
Exult in yourselves O children,
Exult in having a comrade,
In being comrades
Of life that bubbles over mad with joy,
Before the crowded herd of evils
Oppressively is gathered in old bodies.

.
Now meet again in comfort
At the breakfast table in the garden
With the tablecloth of figured blue of flowers.
Crisp, crackling rolls
Sweet to the tooth.
The brown, strong chocolate thick with cream
Gives again a rising courage hot
To eyes no more that waver,
Resting redness warms your life

Again already,
The tenderly thankful life,
That in the charm of the past
Foresees the future's rapture.
So deliciously is youth renewed.
Rule soberly
In kindness grown again silent,
Wife of the house that reachest the goblet,
Rule with the sceptre bright
Of the rattling silver spoon !

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL,

b. 1874.

TWO.

SHE brought a drinking-cup to him,
Her chin and mouth were like its rim.
So light and steadily she stept,
No drop from out the goblet leapt.

He reined, with light and steady hand,
A fiery stallion unspent,
And, with a gesture negligent,
He brought it trembling to a stand.

Yet when he reached his hands to take
The cup with such a light thing filled,
It was too heavy by a pound !
For so the two of them did shake,
That neither hand the other found,
And dark wine on the ground was spilled.

BALLAD OF THE OUTER LIFE.

AND deep-eyed children cannot long be children,
Knowing of nothing they grow up and die,
And all men go their ways upon the earth.

And bitter fruits are sweetened by and by,
And fall at night like dead birds to the floor,
And in a few days rot even where they lie.

And ever blows the wind, and evermore
A multitude of words we speak and hear,
And now are happy, and now tired and sore.

And roads run through the grass, and towns uprear
Their torch-filled toils, some menacingly live,
And some cadaverously dry and drear.

Why are these built aloft? And ever strive,
So countless many, not to be the same?
And tears drive laughter out till death arrive?

What profits man this ever-changing game?
Full-grown are we, yet still like chartless ships,
And wandering never follow any aim.

What profit hath he who the furthest roams?
And yet he sayeth much who "evening" saith,
A word from which deep melancholy drips

Like heavy honey out of hollow combs.

MANY INDEED MUST PERISH IN
THE KEEL.

MANY indeed must perish in the keel,
Chained where the heavy oars of vessels smite,
Others direct the rudder on the bridge,
And know the flight of birds and charted stars.

Others with weary limbs lie evermore
By the inextricable roots of life,
For others chairs are with the sibyls set,
The Queens, in whose abode they dwell at home,
With brain untaxed and soft unhampered hands.

But from those lives a shadow falls athwart
On these the lighter, and as to earth and air
The light is with the hard life bound in one.

I cannot free my eye-lids from fatigues
Of nations long-forgotten, no, nor guard
My soul in terror from the soundless fall
Of stars remote in deeps of cosmic dark.

Existence plies her shuttle through the woof
Of many fates indissolubly one,
And my own portion of this common life
Is more than taper flame or slender lyre.

CHOSE VÉCUE.

FILLED with the gloaming's fragrance silver-grey
The valley was, as when the moon through clouds
Filters her rays. And yet it was not night.
With silver-grey scent of the shadowy vale
My gloaming thoughts swam out, and silently
I sank down into the transparent sea
Of woven waves, and left my life behind.
What wondrous flowers were there, with chalices
Dark-glowing ! And what thickets there of plants
Gleamed through by streaming bands of yellow ray
As by the light of topazes. The whole
Was brimming with a swelling how profound
Of melancholy music. And I knew,
Although I understood not, yet I knew:
That this is death. Death is to music changed,
Mightily yearning, sweet, and darkly glowing,
Kin to the core of sadness.

Yet how strange !

A nameless forlorn feeling in my soul
Weeps without any sound for life, as he
Weeps, who on a great ship on the sea
With yellow giant sails set to the west,
On dark-blue waters passes by the town
Where he was born. And there he sees the streets,
He hears the fountains murmuring, smells the scent
Of elder-trees, and sees himself a child
Standing at ocean's margin with child's eyes
Filled with uneasy tears, sees the dear light
Shine through the open casement of his room—
But the sea-monster bears him on and on,
Gliding on dark-blue waters with no sound,
And yellow strangely-fashioned giant sails.

THY FACE.

THY face with dreams was laden utterly.
And I upon thee gazed with dumb affrights
O how it rose ! that I already once
Had wholly given myself in earlier nights

Unto the moon and too-belovèd vale,
Where on the empty precipices stood
Emaciated, scanty trees with low
And little clouds of mist between them going,
And where the river through the stillness let
The ever fresh and ever unknown waters
Sing onward silver-white, O how it rose !

O how it rose ! For I to all these things,
And to their loveliness I knew was sterile,
Had wholly given myself in yearning tender,
As now for the beholding at my peril
Thy hair, and underneath thy lids this splendour

STANZAS ON MUTABILITY.

I.

STILL on my cheeks I feel their fondling breath:
How can it be that days so very nigh
Are gone, for ever gone, and merged in death !

This is a thing that no man fathoms quite,
And far too cruel for complaint or cry,
That all things slip and drip out of men's sight.

And that my own untrammelled I hath found
 Out of a little child its gradual stair,
To me unearthly, dumb, strange as a hound.

Then: that I was a hundred summers ere
 My birth, and that my forebears underground
Are closely kin to me as my own hair.

As much at one with me as my own hair.

II.

The hours! when we are gazing at the peerless
 Blue of the sea, and read Death's riddle stark
So easily and solemnly and fearless.

As little pale-faced maidens stand and hark,
 Cold always, with their great eyes opened wide,
Hearken in silence looking into the dark,

Out of their sleep-drunk limbs they feel life glide
 Noiselessly into grass, and trees of the wood,
And smiling tiredly know some little pride,

Even as a holy martyr sheds her blood.

ARNO HOLZ,

b. 1863.

A LEAVE-TAKING.

His friend the watchman was still awake,
The Town-hall roof one silver flake,
And the moon hung over it.

He scarcely knew what grief he bore,
At every step his heart beat sore,
And his knapsack weighed him down.

The street it was so long, so long,
And he heard a voice singing a song:
When the breeze of the May is blowing !

Now elder boughs o'er the hedgerow nod,
And he sees the marble Mother of God
Standing white at the Minster door.

Here he stood for a moment still,
And heard what the jackdaw whistled shrill
Up above on the steeple cross.

Then the landlord of the Lion Hotel,
Put out his lights, and slowly the bell
Of the Minster clock pealed ten.

Everything was, as it used to be,
The nightingale sang on the linden-tree,
And the fountain dreamily ran.

Out of his coat the rose he dashed,
The flower with his stick on the flags he thrashed,
Till the sparks flew, then he went.

The lamp o'er the gateway flickered red,
And the wood into which his pathway led
Stood black in the moonlight there . . .

And where the path the Saints' Stone reaches,
Just where it bends around the beeches,
It all came back to him.

The leaves rustled, he stood and stood:
He stared down where, beneath the wood,
The roofs were glistening.

He saw the house in the garden gleaming,
And this was the end, was the end of the dreaming,
And—the roofs were glistening !

His heart beat wild with piteous pain !
When I come, when I come, when I come back
again !

But he never came back any more.

FOLK-SONG.

O PARTING, O parting,
Who found thee out the first ?
That with such cruel smarting
My heart is nigh to burst !

O were my heart a herb,
I'd hack it bit by bit,
My knife I should be darting
In the wicked roots of it.

I heard it from the women :
Who loves must sorrow know,
That heart's-love does but swim in
A cauldron of heart's-woe.
Heart's-love was gracious to us,
And rose, when fires did glow,
To bubble and to brim in
A cauldron of heart's-woe.

With funeral bells to chime me,
I turn me to the dale.
O hills, when I did climb ye,
What recked I of the gale?
The leaves blow from the lime, see !
The leaves are soaked with rain,
O God, how long will the time be,
Until we meet again ?

HE WAS A LAD LIKE THOSE.

IN the forest lies a village,
The sunshine over it flits,
Before the house at the last strip of tillage
An age-old grandmother sits.
The thread slips through her fingers,
The wheel she was spinning stops,
Her mind in the old times lingers,
She nods, and asleep she drops.

And the hush of noon is creeping
Up the shimmering green hill-brow,
The cricket and thrush are sleeping,
And even the ox at the plough.
When hark ! the forest rounding,
The marching soldiers come,
And ever before them sounding
The clarion and the drum.

And the villagers join in the ringing
Song of old Blücher brave,
The boys mix hurrahs in the singing,
And the wenches their handkerchiefs wave.
May God keep the cornfields from parching,
And water the wide world with rain,
The Kaiser's young soldiers are marching
Down into the grass-green plain.

Round the hill-slope they now are veering,
Where the last little cottages peep,
And the first in the wood disappearing
As the old mother wakes up from sleep.
In brooding deep she is sunken,
Her heart so heavy grows,
Tears run down her old face shrunken :
“ He was a lad like those ! ”

ROSES RED.

ROSES red
Wind themselves around my lance severe.

Through white woods of lilies
Snorts my stallion.

Out of emerald lakes,
Reeds in hair,
Slender, veiless virgins rise.

I ride as I were bronze.

Ever,
Hard before me,
Flies the Phoenix bird,
Singing.

BY NIGHT AROUND MY TEMPLE GROVE.

By night around my temple grove
Watch seven bronze cows ;
A thousand many-coloured stone lamps shimmer.

On a red throne of gumlac
I sit in the Holy of Holies.

Over me,
Through the sandal-wood rafters,
In the square cut out,
Stand the stars.

I blink.

If I stood up now,
My ivory shoulders would smash the roof,
And the egg-shaped diamond before my brow
Would ram the moon !

The fat priests may snore in peace.

I shall not rise.

I squat with folded legs,
And contemplate my navel,

Which is a bleeding ruby
In a naked belly of gold.

RICARDA HUCH,

b. 1867.

MANY A YEAR HAS GONE OVER THE LAND.

MANY a year has gone over the land
Since I kept the snow back where it presses,
And the moon, with a soft, white hand
Combed me my birchen tresses.

Over the chasm clung I
On the sheer rock in the wind's swaying,
Clouds that came dancing hung I
Upon me, for a moment's playing.

Naught of the joy foredoomed
Or sorrow my spirit swept;
Rustled, and withered, and bloomed,
And time in the shade of me slept.

YEARNING.

ONLY to bide with thee
I would bear danger and dearth,
I would leave friends and home
And the fullness of earth.

My longing for thee
Is the wave's for the strand,
Is the swallow's, in autumn,
For the southron land.

I yearn like the son of the Alps,
When he thinks, alone in the night,
Of the mountains heaped with snow
In the moon's light.

HEDWIG LACHMANN,

b. 1870.

TO THE ARTIST.

THE eye of all life follows in our wake.
Even as one often goes, and cannot sunder,
And hears words in oneself that no one spake,
And for a long time goes on suffering under
A fate that long ago its covenant brake—

So in his power holds us an alien being
That we but even now have heedlessly past;
And we are always shadowed pictures seeing;
And from the furthest things of earth is cast
In us a memory beyond all fleeing.

Thou piercest to the face in the dark hood:
The fervour foams round life of thy own heart.
It rises to thee from the ocean flood,
And in the night-storm cries: Give all thou art.
Then thy deeps shiver: Take, O take my blood.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

SHE served him well years nigh on fifty,
As faithful wife and serving-maid.
Herself she scanted, ever thrifty,
And on his plate the dainties laid.

Ten hale and hearty babes she bore him,
And hid them when his anger surged.
She kept a humble mien before him,
And into one with him was merged.

Now he is dead, and she remaining,
As might an orphan, strange and cowed.
For the last time her fingers straining
For him, she stitches now his shroud.

She washes, with thin fingers faded,
His body grim as when in life,
And for the last time, still unaided,
Tends him as serving-maid and wife.

HOME-SICKNESS.

O FOR a ferryman to steer my yearning
O'er easy waves to where its home is lying!
Ever from mountains high it is returning,
With frozen wings, faint unto death with flying.

And O to sail in an easy vessel slowly
Along a stream that rolls a peaceful billow,
That I might enter through a portal lowly,
And lay my head down on a quiet pillow.

There in a warm room would be mild light falling
From evening candles on my hearthstone lonely,
And at my breast an infant, laughing, calling,
And one soul in the whole world mine, mine only.

A WALK.

THE sun is nigh the verge. Soon we must part.
The titmouse moans. The rain falls quick and thin.
The wood is dark and silent as thou art!
Thou who hast left the deepest word within.

Two silver birches at the wood's rim. See
How by a spider's web the pair are wed.
How delicately spun from tree to tree!
What moved us deepest, we have left unsaid.

Feel'st thou the breeze? A quiver from its deeps
Stirs up the lake. And the smooth water shakes.
Around our mouths a shadowy something creeps—
We have not lived but in a dream that wakes.

ELSE LASKER-SCHÜLER,

b. 1876.

WE TWO.

EVENING wafts yearning from sweetness of flowers,
And the hoar-frost on the mountains burns like
diamond-spar,
And cherub heads are peeping over Heaven's bar,
And we two are in Eden bowers.

And all this multi-coloured life is ours, God's gift :
The great, blue picture-book with stars, and heaps
Of cloud-beasts chasing one another down Heaven's
steps,
And heigh-ho ! the winds that spin us like a drift.

And God is dreaming his child's dream, where He
With his companions two in Eden walks,
And great flowers look at us from thorny stalks . . .

When the gloomy earth hung green upon the tree.

CHAOS.

THE stars flee terror-white
From the heavens of my loneliness,
And the black eye of the middle night
Stares nearer and nearer.

I know myself no longer
In this abandonment dying !
Worlds away methinks I am lying
Amid the grey night of the fear primeval . . .

I wish a pain would stir,
And grimly dash me down,
And tear me quick to myself !
And I wish that some creative zest
Would lay me again in my home,
Under my mother's breast.

My mother-home is void of soul,
In the warm breath
No rose-flower blossometh.—
. . . Give me a love, and let me
Bury myself in his flesh !

MAY ROSES.

HE has sworn to his sainted sisters both
Not to seduce me,
Beneath May roses he had soon
Broken his oath,
But he made three crosses,
And I thought I should freeze at noon.

Now I lie in the dark pine wood,
And a north-easter of the fall is blustering icy
hymns
Over my May-time limbs.

But when the weather warms again,
I wish each sainted sister-nun her marriage bed,
And we—shall play then under the May roses . . .

LOVE-SONG.

OUT of one golden breath
Heaven created us.
O tender our love is . . .

Birds on the branches are buds,
Skyward flutter roses.

Ever I am seeking after thy lips
Behind a thousand kisses.

A night of gold
Stars of night
No one sees us.

Comes the light with the green
We slumber.
Only our shoulders still like butterflies
are playing.

DIRGE.

NIGHT is a raven dove
. . . Thou thinkest of me so gently.

I know thy heart is silent
My name stands on its hem.

The sorrows that are thine
To me come also.

The raptures that seek thee
I gather them untouched.

So I bear the blossoms of thy life
Further onward.

Yet fain would silent stand with thee,
Two fingers on the same clock's face.

O all kisses shall be silent
On sun-lit lips the time of love.

Nevermore shall dawning be
Now thy youth is broken.

In thy temples
Perished Eden.

Let the sad for themselves
Paint the sun on the day

And the mourners lay
A glimmer on their cheeks.

In the black chalice of clouds
Stands the bud of the moon—
. . . Thou thinkest of me so gently.

MY LOVE-SONG.

LIKE a hidden spring
 Murmurs my blood,
 Always of thee, always of me.
 Under the reeling moon
 Dance my naked, seeking dreams,
 Sleep-walking, fever-sick children,
 Gently over dark hedges.
 O thy lips are sunny . . .
 Intoxicating fragrance of thy lips . . .
 And out of blue umbels framed in silver
 Laughest thou . . . thou, thou.
 Ever this serpentine rustling
 Upon my skin
 Over my shoulder down—
 I listen . . .
 Like a hidden spring
 Murmurs my blood . . .

EVE'S SONG.

WITH earth's fermenting bath the air a bitter sting,
 And the nakèd March wood yearns and pales
 As thou dost—O I would I were the Spring
 To wind around thee tendrils but of fairy-tales !

Were but my strength alive !
 This aftermath of sorrow is my part,
 And envious heavens rive
 The morning red of my heart.

Thy senses they are cold,
Thine eyes twin dawns,
And on thy shining forehead's tangle of gold
The sun fawns.

But thou like me art cast outside,
Because thou sankest on the garden of my soul,
When the joy of the day of knowledge out of me cried,
And we in rapture drained its death-brimmed bowl.

ZEBAOTH.

GOD I love thee in Thy robe of roses,
When Thou comest out of Thy gardens Zebaoth.
O Thou God-Youth,
Thou Poet,
My loneliness is drunken with Thy fragrance.

My first bloom blood called out for Thee,
O come then,
Thou sweet God,
God the mate of my games,
The gold of Thy gate is melting in my yearning.

LOVE'S FLIGHT.

I LOVED him three storms ere he loved me again,
His lips like the earth's open mouth
Screamed loud in the heat of his drouth,
And drunken were gardens with May's sweet rain.

BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON. 113

Each other's hands we gripped.
They were soldered like rings, and he
Sprang into the heavens with me,
Towards God, till breath failed, and we slipped.

A day that shone down from the skies
Like mothers with children came.
The maidens had melting eyes,
Only my soul was tired and tame.

BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON,

b. 1844, d. 1909.

ERE NOISE AND NAST.

THE earliest sun lies out across the field,
And rises; and the silent morning steams.
Already far behind me lies the gate
Where curled in stubborn slumber lies the town.
Who sprawls here in the wet ditch at my feet?
A crofter who has slept the summer night
Bedded among the thistles where he fell.
His left knee is drawn up; through open lips
The soaked carouser shakes the air with snores.
Behind me—and already dies his din.
What thing is that hard by the mile-stone yonder?
A tiny King Charles spaniel silken white
With tips of hanging ears red with raw blood
And fouled atrociously with soft wet clay.
What business has *he* here, I ask in vain.

114 BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON.

Aunt Minnie's sweet, sweet darling, 'pon my word !
Could *she* but know what pleases her Bijou :
His little snout is busy rooting in
The bowels of a decomposing fox.
As I come near he presses one forepaw
Upon the belly of the carrion beast,
And ducks his head, and eyes me with a growl :
And his whole body stands immovable,
Only his eyes are fixed upon my step.
Behind me—all is soundless still and quiet.
The sun in glaring white shines on a plough,
And seems to burn itself into the steel.
And now the first sound comes, comes from the camp,
That I can see two miles off glimmering white.
Unspeakably faint I hear the roll of drums,
And the bugles : " Have—you not—slept—long
enough ? "

I send the pebbles flying with my heels
Upon the highway I can see stretched out
For full ten minutes distance straight in front.
Just where the road for me begins, appears
A point which goes on growing bigger and bigger.
Hurrah ! It's she ! Hurrah, hurrah ! It's she !
Quickly I pull my handkerchief out of my pocket,
And wave, and a little flag shows itself too
In her hand ; and I quicken up my pace.
I tie my banner to my walking-stick,
And she ties hers upon her parasol.

A fluttering now and circling to and fro,
As though to frighten pigeons off the roof.
The drums are rolling all the time : " Wake up " :
The trumpets tooting : " Have—you not—slept—
long enough ? "

BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON. 115

My face glows in the happiest expectation,
My throat is tied up nearly, and how my heart
Is beating, how my breast is breathing deep.

We are in speaking distance now, and now,
How strange, our haste is shortened all at once.
Are we ashamed, we two? Upon her cheeks
A purple as of a cloud's swift shadow flew,
And now she smiles. Her little head bends slightly
To the right and backwards: yes, and now, and now—

And in the meanwhile drum and trumpet stop—
Dumb as the monk-abandoned cloister-aisle
Around us lies the holy peace of morn.

DEATH IN THE CORNFIELD.

IN poppies and in ripening corn
A soldier, not yet found, is lying,
Already twice through night to morn
With festering wounds unbandaged dying.

With fever wild his pulse beats fast,
In the death-throes his head he raises.
He sees in dream the distant past,
With glazing eye that upwards gazes.

He hears the scythe whirl through the rye,
He smells the meadows sweet with clover;
“Good-bye, old place, old folks, good-bye”—
And bows his head, and all is over.

116 BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON.

WHO KNOWS WHERE?

O'ER hoof-crushed harvests, trodden mire,
O'er dead and dying blazed the fire
 Of sunset-sheen.
Its glory fell on sleep-sealed eyes
That ne'er should see the sun arise
 Above Colin.

A beardless Hotspur that dire day
Obeyed the call of bugle-bray
 To battle-field;
Close as the fluttering flag he clasped,
His upraised arm Death closer grasped,
 And made him yield.

And with his sword lay at his side
A breviary, securely tied
 Beneath the hilt.
A grenadier the booklet found,
Earth-stained upon the gruesome ground,
 Where life was spilt.

To him it seemed a farewell-word,
To that young hero's sire he spurred,
 Who then and there
Wrote in the book with trembling hand:
"Colin. Son shovelled up in sand,
 Who knows where?"

BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON. 117

And he who sang this little song,
And he who reads it, march along,
 And laugh at care.
But some day I, and some day you,
We shall in sand be shovelled too,
 Who knows where?

H. W. and J. B.

INSCRIPTION.

AFTER a rapid gallop in the rain
Upon a cemetery we had struck,
And there dismounted. Hidden from sight within
The walls, we could move free on every side,
And cheer the sentinels as we chattered round them.
Crosses but few. Promptly the picket bound
The halters to the tiny monuments.
And I myself soon leaned my tired head
Upon a turfy mound, and fell asleep. . . .

Shrill neighed my gelding through the foggy damp,
Bursting at once the chains of slavery soft,
In which I rested deep without a dream.
Still sleeping lay around me the dragoons,
With hoar-frost covering their cloaks and beards,
The horses stood around with drooping manes.
Only a snorting and a scraping now
And then, and saddles creaking, and the chains
Rattling, when they against each other knocked.
Rifle in hand, the sentry up and down
Was stamping o'er the gravel of the path.
Deep was the stillness; with a shudder of dawn
A crackling low went through the withered wreaths.

118 BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON.

I raised my head, and turned it round to see
Name and inscription on the little cross
Above me, and I made out in the dusk,
Bringing my eye close to the letters which
Had once been gilt and now were weather-dimmed:
“Fought much—borne more—passed peacefully away.”
The first pale red of dawn was shimmering
Around the words which sank down, heavy as lead,
Into my soul. But time for thought was none.
For out rang the command: “To horse”; then:
“Mount!”
We trotted, with the sun saluting us,
Into the valley, friend and foe to wreath
A garland in the grass of dark red roses.

HOLGER THE HUNTER.

HOLGER the hunter sits after the meet
At his hearth in the hush of the gloaming,
His hound that is lying asleep at his feet
In dreams through the forest is roaming—

Is dreaming again of a distant day—
Fast goes his breath and faster—
When atop of Holger the wild boar lay,
And in peril he rescued his master.

And Holger, eyeing the burning log,
Knits his brow, and is pondering whether,
For a woman's sake he could kill the dog,
Cut the life-bond that binds them together.

H. W.

BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON. 119

WIEBKE POGWISCH.

(BATTLE OF THE HAMME, 1404.)

EMPTY, hollow the moorland lies,
Like the heart that a friend betrayed,
And a blood-red cloud rose to the skies
Upon the marsh's braid.

Upon a steed whose flanks are gored,
A quarry chased far afield,
Rides the squire, bowed forward, without a sword,
With battered helmet and shield.

He bears his lord on the saddle-front ;
O knight, thy pride is foiled !
Thy golden spur hangs bent and blunt,
Thy helm-wolf shamed and soiled.

Soon the morning-star in the heavens stood,
So mild a ray it shed,
They rode into the good greenwood,
The birds sang overhead.

“On the grass and dew now lay me here,
To cool my wounds that smart,
And get thee to my ladye dear,
With the news of my dying heart.”

And the squire rode on an hour, an hour,
Till the castle walls rose grim,
When forth from out her ladye's bower
Came a stately ladye to him.

120 BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON.

“Now flies the flag of victory blithe,
Squire, why dost hang thy chin?
The farmers sure laid down the scythe,
When ye did the lowlands win?”

“O sure we rode to the lowlands low,
As to the feast in glee,
And fair the sinking sun did glow,
When the farmers mowed the lea.”

“And my eight sons, I conjure thee, say!
Why blench thy cheeks for fear?
They rode away so fresh and gay,
Eight sons born year by year.”

“See my finger, it points to the skies,
In the fields they are lying still,
And the vulture over them circles and cries,
Crying so hungry and shrill.”

“Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page.
They were eight, I say again.
Is it for this thou art paid thy wage?
Have pity with my pain.”

“See my finger, it points to God,
In the fields they are lying still,
And the farmer mocks at them dead on his sod,
The vulture shrieks mournful and shrill.”

“And if they fell as nobles ought,
A woman proud am I.
Beside their father dear they fought,
And by his side they lie.”

“Your knight yet breathes.” “Now cursed be he,
That he could not die like the rest.”
“He sought for death in vain, ladye,
And the axe sits deep in his breast.”

“Then lead me hence, I will carry him here,
No sweeter burden I crave,
And I have no other wish so dear
As to bed him soft in his grave.”

Eight corses to the grave they bore,
And each a noble squire.
And o’er his sons for evermore
The troopers lay the sire.

The ladye stands on the turrets high,
The bells are ringing long,
From the garden sounds, and the azure sky,
The sweet birds’ song.

THE DEATH OF LOVE.

In the naked desert rest a pair of lions,
With pencilled yellow hide on yellow sand.
They stretch their lazy limbs in sleep. Awakening,
Reflectively one licks the other, and stretches
Its limbs, and yawns, and goes to sleep again.

A second lion-lord looms in the distance.
He comes, stops short, when he before him lying
Beholds the two companions at their ease.

122 BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON.

Now like a cat he whips earth with his tail,
Tears his jaws open like an entrance gate,
And thunders rumble echoing from his throat.
He cowers, growls, and slyly ogles them.

And ponderously the married pair wake up,
And ponderously get upon their legs.
The second noble crouches for a spring,
And springs, and lights down at the female's side.
Then trots the female off with Seladon
Good-naturedly to a shadling rock.
The male, confounded, thinks of roaring, doesn't,
Lies down composedly : Let the bitch go.

PIETÀ.

How to this shore came Mary with the Corpse ?
It lies hard by the mussels in the sand,
And outwards reaches limitless the sea.
The evening heavens are ominous of storm,
Down to the ocean mirror dips the cloud,
The one black, ponderous convolute of cloud.
Weak, capless waves wash wistfully the strand,
And leave, as they recede, a dirty froth,
Which stretches like a line along the coast.

Upon hard mussels lies the Crucified.
The feet and hands, yet writhing, in soft cloth
Are swathed, to hide the marks, the fearful scars
The nails have made. And o'er Him Mary bends,
In grief immense, and cannot fathom it,

BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON. 123

And cannot fathom it that men as we
So despicably should betray Her Son :
Was He not Love ? Was not his mission here,
His only mission on His path of life :
Peace, and the making of it, and pure hearts ?
“ O Head so full of Blood and Wounds,” and Mary,
Washes with tears the dust from off His face,
And combs the death-sweat dry upon His beard !

And where the sun is parting at the verge,
Hiding itself behind a vapour thick,
Breaks forth a light, but only backwards thrown.
And over all the sea this light is shed,
And shot in streaks until it strikes the shore
And there upon the Group of Sorrows, till
The heavens are of a sudden closed again.
There is a moment of black, ponderous night—
Then blazes far off inwards on the land
A flaming chaos : cities, lands on fire,
And desolate, screaming sound of sword and shields,
Music of war and stamp of horses' hoofs
Rumbles with shrill, clear cry : In Jesus' name !

Down sank the sun, the gloaming comes apace,
A gentle wind is journeying from the west,
And fondling the pointed sand-oats of the dunes,
Cooling the eyes of Our dear Lady there,
Kissing the pain upon the Saviour's face,
And giving a splashing murmur to the wave
That merges with the moan of weeping low
Dripping upon the Saviour without cease.

THE COUNTRY WALTZ.

I WAS commanded to the Castle terrace,
 To read aloud to the gracious, beautiful,
 Brilliant young Princess. I chose Goethe's Tasso.
 The first night-insect through the summer eve
 Already is flitting. Red clouds brightly toned,
 Blended with blue, trail o'er the sunken sun.
 The garden deep below us more and more
 Is swathed in shadows dark. And now begins
 The nightingale. The lackey puts the lamp
 Upon the table, and its light is not
 Set flickering by the slightest breath of air.
 Up to us, from the village, music sounds.
 And clear upon the darkness, streaks of light,
 The windows of a dancing-hall are flashing ;
 The couples skimming quickly past behind.

From time to time, when open stands the door,
 Sounds stamping, shrieking, and the double bass.
 The pleasure there must be untamable.
 I in the meantime reading on and on,
 Unconsciously let the chaotic joy
 Sweep like a row of transient pictures past.
 And just as I had come across these lines :
 " And can the goblet's brim hold in a wine
 That foaming seethes and roaring overflows ? "
 I raised my eyes and saw the Princess there
 Nonchalantly letting her left hand
 Hang o'er the balustrade, hearing me not,
 Her brown eyes, full of longing dreaminess,
 Bent on the rustic dancers deep below . . .

BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON. 125

"Would it by any chance afford your Highness
Pleasure, to join the merry waltz down there?"
And she, a sigh: "O how it would delight me!"
If I could only reproduce her tone,
And give the words again just as she spoke them,
Just hit upon the shade of the "how," the "would!"
Show *how* she said: "O how it would delight me!"

TO A DEAD LADY.

O THAT thou wert alive!

A thousand crows,
Whose black wings hovered over all my ways,
Fled at the fluttering towards them of thy doves.
O that thou wert alive!

Chill, heavy earth
Upon thy coffin weighs and holds thee fast.
I will not go and seek and find not thee.
And shall I see thee again?

See thee, O why?
If we together must Hosannas sing,
And I may never hear thee laugh again?
Thy laugh, thy language, and thy comforting:

"O what a lovely day! Where is Chasseur?
Fetch your Lefauchaux from the cupboard, and
Be off on to the moors, the game still holds.
And don't you lie down in the moss and dream,
You watch the birds, and don't be absent-minded,
And make your own dog take you for a fool.
And Heaven to-day confound all organ-grinders
That from far villages with forlorn music
Send dreams to you—for then you'll bring no game back.

126 BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON

And yet, the brown heath lies so peacefully,
Its spell will lay hold of you, yield to it.
For supper we will have to-night pea-soup,
So bring an appetite back and good humour.
Then you shall read to me from your favourite poets,
And if you like we'll go to the piano after,
And sing together Schumann, Franz, and Brahms.
Let money troubles have a rest to-day.
Your creditors, good gracious ! are not devils,
They cannot roast you, all will turn out right.

And see : I've put good brandy in your bottle.
Give my best love to heath, and woods, and fields
Far from the beaten track, forget your debts,
And I will keep a look-out in the kitchen,
And take care that the pea-soup is not spoiled."

O that thou wert alive !

A thousand crows,
Whose black wings hovered over all my ways,
Fled at the fluttering towards them of thy doves,
The radiant white doves of thy cheerfulness.
O that thou wert alive !

FAR PROSPECT.

THERE stands a mill on the horizon lined,
Against a mouse-gray wall of cloud sharply defined,
And ever more does grind and grind.

Behind the mill on the horizon lined,
Without horizon grinds a mill time out of mind,
Yea, evermore does grind and grind.

THE ISLAND OF THE BLESSED.

THE hanging lamp smokes in the shippon, where
Two cows are licking clean each other's faces.
The fowls on perch dream they are scratching bare
The most miraculous of midden places.
The herd-boy whistles a most melting air
Through the buckle of the belt his breeks that laces.
And boy and cows and fowls are free from care,
While past them the world's river roars and races.

AFTER SHOOTING GAME.

HEATED and tired, burnt thirsty by the sun,
I seek my forest ale-house, and turn in.
Upon the wall I hang my cap and gun,
My pointer licks the bucket to the tin.
Silent and solitary, speaking to none,
The youthful widow serves out beer and gin.
As the guests go, she smiles with secret fun,
We two shall soon be left alone in the inn.

FROM CHILDHOOD'S DAYS.

I SAT to-day half-buried in old letters,
When suddenly one fell into my hand
Which made me shudder with its faded date,
It was so very, very long ago.

128 BARON DETLEV VON LILIENCRON.

The writing large and small and smooth and curly,
And plentifully spattered o'er with blots.
"My dear old Fritz, the trees are leafless now,
And we have given over playing at soldiers
And robbers, Turk has broken his front leg,
And Auntie Annie has got toothache still,
Papa is with his gun out on the moors.
That's all I've got to say. I am quite well.
Write soon, dear Fritz, and see you don't fall ill."
"The trees are leafless now," the bitter word
Made me in silence fold the letter up,
Gave me my hat and gloves and coat and stick,
And drove me out to storm across the moors.

IN A GREAT CITY.

PAST me is drifted in the city sea
Now this man and now that, one after the other.
One look into my face, already past.
The organ-grinder grinds his song.

Past me is dropping in oblivion's sea
Now this man and now that, one after the other.
One look upon his hearse, already past.
The organ-grinder grinds his song.

A funeral train swims in the city sea.
Men cross this way and that, one after the other.
One look upon my hearse, already past.
The organ-grinder grinds his song.

MARIE MADELEINE,

b. 1881.

LENDEMAIN.

SPRING on the Riviera. Through the window
The air of early morning kissed our lips,
The lips kissed sore,
Blistered and parched in this long night of love. — —
The palms were lifting in the morning breeze
Their haughty crowns—and, in the distance, chimes.—
By me my mistress at the window stood,
Stood motionless—and with dead eyes looked out,
With glassy eyes dark-rimmed looked out into
The bright, young dawn. — —
Into the room the tender breath of spring
Came clear as crystal—young, as young as morning, — —
I looked upon the woman at my side.
At times through her slim body, as it were
A nervous shudder twitched. And O her eyes,
Her glassy dark-rimmed eyes looked dead into
The young dawn. And a perfume as of flowers
Half-withered out of her tired body came.
And when she pressed upon me, and with lips
Pale, parched, and blistered rose to reach my mouth,
Disgust washed o'er my senses like a wave,
And with quick hand I thrust the woman down,
I shook her like a reptile from my breast. — —
She stood as silent as a statue, then
She made as with her hands to clutch her heart,
And fell face forwards. And her long, black hair
In heavy masses o'er the carpet trailed.

I trod upon her hair, as I went out. —
I went. I did not cast one look behind
Upon the woman I had just enjoyed,
And who had withered in one night of love.
I went. — And the young spring breathed on my face
And the young dawn was storming up the sky.

SAPPHO.

THE dark sea waves are murmuring
The dirge they ever must renew,
The May night winds its sultry wing
Around my soul that seeks for you.

O come ! ye maidens sweet and fair !
Your beauty I will hold and drink.
Give to the wind your wildering hair,
And noiseless let your garments sink.

Reach me thy mouth, thou ashen maid,
And fan my furious rage : thy lips
Are cool as cherries in the shade,
Nor yet thou knowest how love grips.

And thou that bendest under thy
Too heavy weight of golden curls,
See ! to thy silken sandal-tie
Like billowing fire thy hair unfurls.

And thou ! let see the flickering lights
That scatter hot out of thine eyes !
Go not from me in the starless nights,
For thou art fair as the young sunrise.

But ye are like twin sunbeams thin,
Ye shy and slender sisters twain,
Ye hold your hungry love within,
And starve him with a feast of pain.

Your delicate limbs are marble-white,
White as the sea-foam's phosphor gleam,
Your hair is like the wildering night,
And ye are silent as a dream.

O bright nosegay ! O maidens fair,
Your beauty I will hold and drink.
Give to the wind your wildering hair,
And noiseless let your garments sink.

SALVATION.

THE sickly blossoms of my dreams
Are shed abroad in the strong wind's riot,
Now that around me glows and gleams
Your love will fire serene and quiet.

How clear above me is the air !
O bliss in the deep heart abiding,
Now over my unruly hair
Your cool beloved hands are gliding !

Since you, a man mature, strong-willed,
Unto a peaceful flow assuaging
With careful love controlled and stilled
My thoughts that ever would be raging.

You took from me my youth's unrest ;
The live desire that stung and stained me
Was crushed out by your forceful breast,
And perished when your arms constrained me.

O fabulous joy bright bells that rings,
While the long night of autumn races,
When your hot mouth to my mouth clings,
And we are woven in embraces !

And all the while one single star,
Pale star, is through the casement peeping,
And gently croons the sea afar
Till we are sleeping . . .

SALOME.

WHY does my mad blood burn and sting ?
What is thy pale, frail face to me ?
As black is thine eyes' smouldering
As Jordan's pools deep as the sea.

Down in my father's dungeon dank
There is a pool of twisted snakes ;
My lust for thee is far more rank,
The lust with which my body shakes.

My love shall be a sea of bliss,
Whereinto, moaning, thou shalt sink.
No wine of Greece shall taste like this,
Which thou from my thrust lips shalt drink.

And I have drenched my couch with myrrh,
And aloe sweet, and cinnamon.
My bracelets shall ring fast, and stir
The dark lit by our bodies wan.

My lips shall laugh a laughter red,
And slender slaves with face that pales,
Assyrian chiefs, shall coolness shed
From many-coloured peacocks' tails,

While breathless rapture stings and whips
Our passion pouring at the flood,
And I shall drink, with sateless lips,
Thy vigour and thy heart's young blood. . . .

How stark art thou . . . how marble white !
Like a long dagger is thy scorn.
Hear me ! or else thy limbs shall light
No prison gloom to-morrow morn !

I know, this raging love of mine,
In this way also can be stilled: — —
Soon shall thy blood leap red, and shine
On the white sand of Syria spilled.

AGNES MIEGEL,

b. 1879.

SPRING ON THE BALTIC.

OH, what a spring was that !—the whole night long
The nightingale rang out her rapturous song ;
The hyacinthine day and velvet gloom
Were drunk with fragrance of the lilac-bloom.

And strewn with amber lay the golden strand,
And waves sighed softly to the shimmering sand ;
On sea-birds' wings far into realms of light
The wild, wild longing of my youth took flight.

H. W

THE MAIDEN'S PRAYER.

FOR Jesus' sake, O God above,
Keep safe and sound my own true love !

By the Saviour's blood for sinners shed,
Grant that he kiss my mouth so red !

By the bliss of my soul, grant that he die,
If he kiss any other woman than I !

THY HANDS.

WHEN I call to mind thy hands so slender,
Which can fondle soft as hands of women,
Which as cruel are as hands of children—
Then I close my eyes in sweet enchantment,
Then I close my eyes in anguished terror,
For I know, these frail hands that I cherish
Hold a golden globe, my destiny.

FAIR AGNETE.

WHEN the widow of Earl Ulrich in the church was
kneeling,
There came a song out of the churchyard pealing,
Up in the loft the organ ceased,
Gaping stood all the choir-boys and the priest,
All the parish listened, woman, man, and child,
The voice outside sang like a nightingale so wild :

“Dearest mother praying in the pew,
Hear what thy daughter sings beneath the yew !
I can never come inside, O mother mine,
I shall never kneel again at Mary’s shrine,
For my eternal soul I needs must lose
When I wedded the black Merman in the ooze.
My children with the fishes play and dive,
They have webs between their toes and fingers five,
Their frocks that drop with pearls no sunshine dries,
Nor death nor dream can close my children’s eyes.

Dearest mother, O I pray to thee,
Dearest mother, say not nay to me,
Mother, pray with all thy household there
For my water-babies with their wet green hair,
Pray to Our Lady and the Saints before
Every church and every cross the country o'er !
I entreat thee, O my mother dear,
I can only come to church each seventh year,
Tell the proud priest, mother, let him throw
The church-door open wide as it will go,
So that I the lighted candles may behold,
And the Monstrance shining all of gold,
That I may tell my babes before they sleep
How the Chalice shines like sunbeams through the
 river's deep.

The voice was hushed. The organ played once more,
Open wide was flung the broad church-door.
And all the while the priest and people prayed,
Before the porch a white, white water played.

A CHRONICLE.

A MAIDEN in the heathery leas,
And she the flocks was keeping,
And as she sang in the summer breeze,
Her hair to the grass was sweeping.

The young King from his castle high
Came, in his hand the jesses—
He stayed his horse by the gilded gorse,
To gaze on her golden tresses.

She sang a love-song that did melt
 The King's heart to adore her,
 And quietly in the grass he knelt,
 And laid his crown before her.

Far and wide her fair renown
 O'er land and sea went ringing—
 And yet the young Queen in her crown
 Was never more heard singing.

KNIGHT ERRANT.

ONWARD through forests I rode on many a weed-wasted
 way,
 After the fall of the night awake in the wet grass I lay,
 The night-winds sighed through the beeches on heathen
 barrows dank,
 And behind the hills at the verge with the moon my
 yearning sank.
 I stretched out my arms, and my harness rang with a
 hollow sound,
 Behind the hills, holy Grail, where is thy hiding-ground?
 Yellow my locks hung down when first on the quest I
 stole,
 Gray grew my hair, hacked my shield—and distant as
 ever my goal.

An evening came as no other; sultry the air in the
 wood,
 Under the beeches a scent as of roses wildered the
 blood,

Silver-carved in the sky stood the new moon's slender
cup,
And the roar of the rutting stags through the mist in the
valley rose up.
And I knew that the hour was at hand ; under the mesh
of my mail
Trembled my heart as the boy's once, my face as the
boy's grew pale,
A man in the might of magic slowly I rode along,
And back on my memory came surging many a love-
laden song.
A beech stands apart in the clearing up on the hill's
steep brow,
There lay a hind bound with cords—the hind of the
beech-tree art thou.
My sword cut the cords. O moonlight, mournful and
blue in the glade !
I went out in quest of the Grail, and I found a naked
maid.

ANNE BULLEN.

THE door on its jarring hinges
Turned and the jailer said :
“ Get up and mount the staircase,
Your judges are overhead.”

Anne Bullen's wrist-chain rattled
As paler she arose ;
Her hair in a golden tangle
On her prison garment flows.

“ Who are the lords that as judges
The king has set over me? ”—
“ Forsooth, three haughty faces,
And all well known to thee.

The one with the locks of chestnut
Is Percy Northumberland.”—
“ I wore, when our troth we plighted,
His pledge upon my hand.”

“ A dark Papist, the Duke of Norfolk,
Is the second, full of pride.”—
“ Norfolk is my uncle
Upon my mother’s side.

He and Lord Percy in homage
Before me bent the knee,
Their knightly swords unsheathing
Allegiance they swore to me.

Ye perjurers both !—I bewail not
That you forswore your word ! . . .
Now, jailer, of my three judges,
Speak out, who is the third? ”

“ In sin and in corruption
Sixty years have blanched his head ;
His crimson robe of justice
With the blood of his heir is red,—

The furrows on his forehead
Are the writ of his deep disgrace ! ” . . .
Then they entered the hall, and pallid
Grew Anna Bullen’s face.

“ Now Heaven be my defender ! ”
She said with bated breath,
“ Lord Wilford, — yea, my own father,
Delivers me up to death.”

H. W.

MADELEINE BOTHIWELL.

IN courtly pomp and pleasure begot,
To be nursed in need was my luckless lot.

In a Scottish castle, washed by a lake,
To direst woe did these eyes awake.

Oft, oft, four narrow walls between,
Was I carried and cradled by Scotland's Queen.

Hell's cursed brood came, and, where she stood,
Tore from her breast her flesh and blood.

King James's grandchild in ruthless hate
They laid at the Norman cloister-gate.

I told my beads, the flight of time
Marking by chapel chaunt and chime.

I grew, — like Lord Bothwell, I too was fair
With my mother's wealth of wavy hair.

The very scissors made halt before
My tresses flowed on the convent floor ;

Before my red, red lips did part
To speak the vow that broke my heart.

I sang my orisons, night and day,
Chastising my flesh to watch and pray.

But at every lash, every shoulder stroke
The old, old longing to life awoke—

The Stuart longing for love and song,
For homage and splendour, for might and wrong.

I sin in my dreams.—“Sœur Madeleine,
It is time for early mass again !

Thou chosen of Mary, from penance faint,
Soon, soon shalt thou kneel at her throne, a
 saint . . .”

Through the chapel twilight, calm and dim,
Floats from the choir the nuns’ sweet hymn.

And a sound in the swell of the organ lies,
As when in the distance thunder dies.

Ablaze is the altar with light and gold,
I gaze without seeing,—I only behold

A coffin of deal . . . and for the rest
A purple pall, and a proud, proud crest.

H. W.

SPRING EVENING.

THE bright May day is gradually ending,
Spring's dark blue clouds across the heavens steal,
While dusk upon the landscape is descending,
Where seeking violets yet the children kneel.

In all the orchards are the starlings wrangling,
Through fledgeling trees rustles the playful breeze,
That like a baby's hand my hair is tangling,—
Deeply I breathe.—How green are all the leas !

Day's anxious pulse the dusk of springtide deadens,
Subdued desires are in the breast alive,—
Calling with mouth that youth's rich heart-blood reddens :
The violets blow. O withered joy, revive !

THE CHILDREN OF CLEOPATRA.

WE are the children Cleopatra bore.
Bred in those nights when the Nile rose in flood
To wash a blessing out beyond its banks,
Kissed into life by burning lips that still
Bled with the kisses of Mark Antony.
And the first song whose tone of silver sweet
Around our golden cradles rang caress,
It was the song our mother sang to him
Who carried Semele content to die
As Zeus into the spaces of the sun.

The heat and madness of their love-nights lay
Sultry as incense in the gilded halls
Wherein we played.

And their late autumn's sun,
When sweeter grew the sweetness of their smile,
Their glance humility, and love their voice—
Shone with bright light through the last days of all,
When we looked on our mother's loveliness.

Antony died . . .

And clinging to his corpse,
Jealous of Proserpine she perished for
Her body's master.

But we live, our youth laughs,
Our lips are red with the blood of the Ptolemies,
Our foreheads, proud as Roman foreheads, bear
The diadem of Kings . . .

Cæsar, beware !
What though the lioness sleeps in the womb
Of a Pyramid, her cubs yet breathe the sun,
We are the children Cleopatra bore !

ABISHAG THE SHUNAMMITE.

THEY sought a maid whose flesh was warm,
Through all the coasts they sought her ;
A Shunammite was the fairest of form,
And to King David they brought her.

Into his hall they guided my feet :
" Kiss the King's cold hanging fingers,
And eat with him, and sing him the sweet
Songs of the old shepherd singers."

King David was tenderly unmanned;
As I sang he fell a-thinking;
His goblet fell out of his trembling hand,
And his head on his breast was sinking.

The leaden sleep of seventy years,
That in their snow have lapped him,
King David slept upon my breast,
And in my hair I wrapped him.

Now in the chambered palace dusk
My days I measure and number,
And I sing the King, as he were a child,
Over his wine into slumber.

And I must warm him in my lap,
And fondle his thin tresses,
And my blood is hot, and my hate is wild,
I shudder at his caresses.

And when I see on his temples dun,
The crown of Israel gleaming,
On the head of Adonijah his son
I think it would look more beseeching.

His hair is red, *his* skin is not cold,
His mouth is like a pomegranate blossom—
And the Shunammite woman were fain to hold
Adonijah in her bosom.

LIFE UNBORN.

WHEN blossom petals burst apart,
 When summer sunbeams warm are pouring,
 The unborn life beneath my heart
 Is weeping tender tears imploring.

“Thou walkest in the sunbeams bright,
 By roses and by sheaves of harvest,
 Forgetting how I yearn for light,
 I whom thou hidest here, and starvest.

Yet how thy heart would glow and sing,
 And how much fairer would the earth be—
 Did my sweet laugh above it ring,—
 O mother come, and bid my birth be !

I am a chubby hand, where oft
 Thy kisses lone in dreams are falling,
 A baby's mouth so rosy soft,
 Which thirsts, and for thy breasts is calling.

I am a soul that seeks for thine,
 Whose tininess shall yet compel thee,
 A little voice that prattles fine,
 And O I have so much to tell thee !

Look inward to the sunless gloom,
 Not on the buds in sunshine lying.
 Hark to the weeping in thy womb,
 The unborn life to thee is crying.”

APHRODITE.

THE echo of the hymn the hetæræ sang
With heavy odour of the nard arose;
And, gaudy against the marble porticoes
The temple's copper portals open sprang.
Bowing her narrow forehead filleted
With roses, Aphrodite stepped into
The evening's purple glow, which heavily
Shone on the red hair rolling from her head.
The dark blue water of the smooth south sea
Kissed with caressing cool of Naiad lips
Her tender feet, as over it she hied,
And cast up roses at the jagged cliffs
That the last sunbeams struck before they died,
And underneath those feet a carpet laid
Of cloth of gold. And sunk in dreams she played.
But suddenly she started. Solemn, slow,
A man, whose eye fell on her, hovered by.
The goddess raised her silken lashes sweet:
It was a thin man in a hairy gown,
His hands were pierced, pierced were his bleeding
feet,
And a strange crown was on his locks unshorn—
A densely-woven diadem of thorn.*
Yet on his brow divine there lay a light,
And with a blessing touched his pale right hand
On Aphrodite's brow the rose-wreath bright.
"Who art thou?" as in slumber questioned she.
"I am the Saviour come into the world
For them, O Cypris, ruined by thy frown."
She pondered. "I have never heard of thee,
O thou strange god cold in thy hairy gown.
Yet of a truth the tidings came to me,

That the Olympians had been trampled down.
Say, art thou he whose feet on Zeus trod?"
"Woman, I am." "Thou art a mighty god.
Mighty as I to whom the great gods cried,
I for whom Mars was in derision held.
But thou, wilt thou not cast away thy pride,
And kneel to me like those my smile compelled?
What is thy name?" "Jesus." She breathed the
word,
As though some other distant thing she heard.
"Listen, thou pale one! Love-songs from the shore!
Drunken with fragrance comes the night." And o'er
The sea that shone in rays of moon and star
Like silver dust, she passed down to the land.
Trembling to bless her beauty rose a hand,
A pale hand pierced through with a bleeding scar.

ALFRED MOMBERT,

b. 1872.

WATERS WELTERING.

I CAME unto a land where weltering
As far as eye could reach were waters grey,
And over them cool ether breathed, and spoke
In sweeping accents something; in a boat
I stood in dream erected, and impelled
Slowly my vessel on with a long pole,
Which probed the ooze below, and stirred from sleep
Relucent stars. The boat, eternal-long,
Glided across the deep with keel that thence
Was gilded by the faces that were now

Awakening on it, and indeed this thing
Commoved my entrails, seeing that I was close
Wrapped in a cloak so dark, nor saw myself
My countenance. Thus in the boat erect
I drove my vessel past a water-plant,
That lonely, compact as an isle, and fair
As any garland bloomed. And in it sate
A man deep pondering. And I wondered how
Stately he loomed, and here how much at home.

The stars that on me shone out of the deep,
They were this man's ideas, and he filled
Here all things full,
He never looked at me.
But I remembered that I too was there,
And strongly steering through this realm,
That he but earlier came than I,
And penetrated and possessed it all—
An hour before my time.

And so I raised my long pole from these waves,
And beckoned him across to me,
Half-questioningly, half-imperiously.
And he stood glorious high in narrow bark.
With golden flute in hand
Pointed his outstretched arm
Into the distance far, how far! And there
Upon the verge a range of mountains lay;
And over them blue haze.
Thither he pointed me, his countenance
Shone blessed, and his eyes in tender tears
Rested on me, my darkness, and my fire.
As though I were his mind's
Desired heir who should complete his task.
There at the last verge lay a realm—*my Realm*.

THE RISING OF THE MOON.

A GRAY, gray town of many wildering streets,
Where I the night should tarry travel-bound.
Down the long thoroughfare in twilight trance
Listless I strode, and, lifting up my eyes
Of a sudden, something very strange and new
Surged round me with a ghastly breath that held.
Rigid before their shops stood citizens.
Bakers and butchers reckless of their trade
With glittering eyes gazed at the street's far goal:
The street stretched west to east straight as a string.
There a gigantic ball of flaming red
Climbed fighting up a wall of jet-black cloud.
O giant great . . . O flaming fire-ball . . .
I and they all gazed, gazed, and in the soul
An unsuspected feeling of the god.
A whispering holy, mild.
And one I saw who bared his silver hair . . .
Then o'er the causeway shuffled heavy steps,
And a voice cut the silence: "Fools ye are!
Why gaze ye goggle-eyed upon the moon?"
Round wheeling, I beheld a hundred fists
Rain down upon one spine like whirl of wings.
They laid him low for this his cry profane.
But afterwards perplexed they grouped around,
As startled from a marvellous, deep dream,
And slunk like murderers into houses red.
Blinds rattled down. A silence as of death.
I stepped in terror nigh the stricken man.
Dead. He was dead. A look of wonderment,
Of understanding not in his red eyes.
Shattered anear his golden-rimmed pince-nez.

I looked up to his murderess the moon.
She rose by minutes, shrivelling, yellowing.
Another hour and silvern she will be.

THE LAKE.

WORLD-REMOTE dumb, a thinker,
The lake in hard rock room, from any note
Of the world's joy and sorrow, a weird sinker
Into his own deeps, rests remote.

But in the night—the night,
When the moon in beamy swings
Drives to dancing women white,
Leaps up the eremite !
Babbles childish things—
The foam of yearning !—Verses ! !
And he laughs ! and he howls ! and he curses !
And he presses in his arm
The dry-breasted island !
A sensual idiot—
A voluptuary.

NOW.

I LIE in an open window with a woman.
Both arms by each other resting.
We are looking down into a flower-garden.
Both looking dumbly down on a red pink.
We know we love each other now and so.
Also: that we shall never love each other again
After this moment.

SPRING.

SPRING !

Through the green landscape went in thought

Ladies lovely, who the spring's heart please :

Shapes graceful earnest into radiance raught,

Heaven's caryatides.

And one I marked, the last of these,

One that I in a hot year had hotly known,

A lady sweet with sun and sin ;

Saw round her shoulders still the fleece of tresses shine,

Lifted boldly from the golden treasure of the Rhine.

Somewhat paler of a sooth I deemed her grown,

And, as in my wonderment meseemed : more tall.

In her ear I whispered as I brushed her by :

" Speak—how is it with thee now?—And canst thou
hope? "—

But she

Looked on me with unrecognizing eye,

Loud proclaimed her pallid lip :

" It is spring."

CENA.

GRAY the days crept, sun was none,

Days gray and weary many a one.

Both of us were sick and gray,

We who met in days without a sun.

Then would she ask in her unrest,

Sheltered on my breast,

The shy child :

" Tell me—tell me now !

How far is it to the sun? "

And once above her face I bowed,
And smiling kissed her brow,
And spake from out a dream:
"The sun art thou" . . .

Wildly she flung herself around me, burning,
proud:
"Then I will on thee beam,
Like the sun!"

THE RISING MOON.

IN the night café in the great city,
On red cushions lounging prostitutes,
And no one any longer there, no guest, no waiter,
Only I, alone at a marble table,
And at the opposite wall the prostitutes.
The incandescent light seemed turned to ice,
And there was silence stark as death.
And slowly I arose,
I stepped across,
I spoke with gentle, begging! gentle tone:
"Your souls pain you."
Up started all the prostitutes at once,
And screamed with tone of thunder in my ear!
"Our body!"
And groping I reeled back,
And at the opposite wall the prostitutes.
And I sat rigid,
And sat in the cosmos.
High. And thought,
What all this
Means.

Why in the brazen cosmos
This is.

The night, dark as before Creation, nothing spake,
But *once* rose silvern a moon,
While I was brooding:
My soul is wake,
And pondering on it . . .

The night grew silvern pale with a great ache,
Ghostly splendour . . .

PETITION.

EVERY breath of thy spirit,
Every limb of thy body—
A net that I fell into.

Goldenly laughing maid,
Thou art sunny as homeland :
Thou art scented with homeland.

Only an hour, one hour
Let me rest in thy nets.
Only an hour
Grant me my homeland.

THE TOWN.

O THE town !
But even now black sultry with storm—
Consumptive rabble, hungry, wretched—

Workshop smoke and misery—mud, mud, mud—
And the sun broke through—and blue sky!
The Minster's monster dome is glittering golden!
Carriages gallop up with milky stallions!

BELOVÈD.

BELOVÈD—

Hovering out in a bird's song
That over the trees
In the last coolness of their crests
Sings his breast's bright heat,
While at his feet
Sun red as flame
In the black forest is drowned—

Foresee, what once shall be,
When the song grows silent, and my soul
Comes only from the springs of woods invisible
a sound.

ALONG THE STRAND.

I STRAYED along the strand with mussels strewn.
A woman was behind me walking
With blown hair, and body wondrous sweet.
Weeping she was. Down fell her tears
As iridescent pearls into the open mussels.
I smiled, when this I saw—dreamily
Beat my heart as the World-Clock.

I bowed me down to gather a pearl mussel,
The woman touched me with her body—
Kneeling I looked up:
The world was dream, and all the mussels quivered,
Golden gleamed the woman's hair.

THE MOON BEHIND ME.

THE moon behind me groping as I led
Did now the land of night primeval tread.
And in a valley of the realm new-lit
We found a mighty corse and knew not it,
Prostrate, and lonely, and without a name.
Leaning we stared at the dark face, and sate
Dreamy; for a thought in wait.
And whispering we took
Counsel, scooped the ground,
Buried the dead man in a rocky nook.
But wheresoever vigilant we came
After, the traces of his deeds we found.

AT DAY'S DECLINE.

WE are together at day's decline.
You bring the lamp in,
And wine.
You fetch the case, and play us
Upon the violin
All that I hold silent in my breast.

Into the world you force yourself, blest,
Me you force out of the world
Into the beginning into the roar of chaos.

I am lying over the dark waters,
Wrapped in the surging vapours of massed clouds
My soul creates in fearful rut the lights of heaven

Ye blessed constellations
Over my dark creator's brow,
In shining circles sweep,
Sing me with a song of children sleep.

FOR A NEW WORLD.

FOR a new world a sketch :
One single snow-field of a far stupendous stretch,
Soars in the centre steep a tower stupendous,
And in the glass room of the tower on high
A woman, splendid in red hair of flame,
That through the crystal pane illuminates
Down shining o'er the snow the world.
And so eternally it might remain.
But once in each eternity
Steps a man rock-tall,
From the world's ends
—Mighty step—nearer and nearer footfall,
Hither, and into the tower,
The shutters then are closed above
By mighty tender hands of love :

At this time over the world is utter
Darkness, only a reddish streak of light
Shines through a narrow chink of the shutter—

And high o'er all, so high that every blood coagulates,
I am hanging as a desolate cosmic tear,
O'er the eternities that meditates.

SLEEPING THEY BEAR ME.

SLEEPING they bear me
Into my homeland.
From far away I come,
Hither over peaks and chasms
Over a dark ocean
Into my homeland.

Now that I have quelled the strongest
of the giants,
Out of the darkest land
Won my way home,
Led by a white fairy hand—

Echo heavy the bells.
And I stagger through the streets
Sleep-bound.

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN,

b. 1871.

LITTLE BIRD MELANCHOLY.

A LITTLE black bird flies over the world,
It sings as death so sadly . . .
And they that hear it hear nothing besides,
They hear it and ponder on suicides,
And care not to look any more at the sun.

At midmost night, at midmost night
It rests upon Death's finger.
Death fondles it gently, and whispers the word :
"Fly, my little bird ! Fly, my little bird !"
And fluting it flies again over the world.

ELISABETH PAULSEN,

b. 1879.

QUESTION.

HAST thou also on thy pathway
Wandered long in reveries tearful ?
Durst not burst the tender fearful
Bonds of yearning.

Didst not dare to fill with golden
Sun thy shadowed eyes? Being bidden
By false shame to hold still hidden
Every lovely nakedness.

Until need, constrained to wake thee,
Laid thee on a bosom living?
Now thy soul's full fount is giving
Copious blessing.

SIGH.

GIVE me to drink !—

Pitchers and amphoræ empty, I
Found painted jars magnificent.
Do maidens draw at the well no more?
No Samaritan woman, tender and shy,
To me the pitcher bent.

My thirst is sore !—

A STRANGER.

THEY stayed thy feet.
Thy robe without a pleat
To them was new.

They asked: Where from? Where to?
Thou spakest: See! Hear! I am who
I seem to you.

My thoughts are clean
As are my hands.
Ill were I seen
In folds cast to conceal !
I am a woman blest, I feel.

This when they heard,
The venom of their hearts was stirred.

Then with sly eyes they one another sought,
And mirrored caught
The evil thought.

Thee they believe not, seeing in thee a stain ;
Too simple and too plain
Is thy demeanour.

LIBERATION.

WHEN the raging mountain torrent
Comes to his senses,
When he his frolicsome strength
Fain would otherwise use
Than teasingly from stone to stone to be springing,
When his roaring singing
Deafens his yearning no longer,
Then he tears with a zest,
Foaming stronger and stronger,
The earth's breast.

Deep in the ground are thrust
His teeth of a beast of the chase,
He shakes in his lust
The manes of his waves as they race.

But the pines on the steep slope,
Each a slender queen,
Throw him down no crown.
In front of them they gaze,
With gloomily imperious mien.
They do not to tarry invite him,
They slight him.

Abashed he stays,
And feels full of shame :
I have squandered my opulent strength.

He grows tame,
Timid the hill he descends,
His sparkling youth aside he lays.

Humbly he kisses
The dark land.
He courts, and pets
The bright sand.
Till self-forgotten he quite forgets
How glorious and how strong he is.

Longing for the bride's
Caress of the sea,
Broad and quiet he shines.
And when the sun would catch him in bright nets,
Gladly he glides
Onward.

RAINER MARIA RILKE,

b. 1875.

O SELDOM.

O SELDOM into the breathless
Restless rustle of life,
Reaches one of the crowning, deathless
Hours that consecrate strife;
Hour thou accidentally seest,
That imprisons thy hand with fingers gentle:
Come and be the only
Guest at my lonely feast.

HOW GLORIOUS THE CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

How glorious the chrysanthemums that day!
I almost shuddered at their splendour white . . .
And then you came to take my soul away
Deep in the night . . .

Such fear had I, and you came dear and wary,
Just when a dream had flashed you on my sight.
You came—and like a song from lips of fairy,
Rang out the night . . .

PRAYER OF THE MAIDENS TO MARY.

I.

O SEE how narrow are our days,
How full of fear our bed ;
We reach out awkward arms always
To gather the roses red.

Thou must be mild to us, Mary,
Out of Thy blood we blow ;
And what a pain is yearning
Thou alone canst know ;

For Thou hast known this maiden's woe
In Thine own soul's desire ;
It feels as cold as Christmas snow,
And yet is all on fire . . .

II.

AFTER THE PRAYER.

But I feel how my heart is glowing
Warmer and warmer in my breast,
And every evening poorer growing,
Nor any night can bring me rest.

I tear at the white silken tissue,
And my shy dreams cry out to Thee :
Let me be sorrow of Thy sorrow,
O let us both
By the same wonder wounded be.

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THY GREAT TOWNS, LORD.

THY great towns, Lord, are lost to shame,
Things merged in misery and maddened ;
The greatest is like flight from flame,—
Comfort is none for them to be gladdened,
Their life is shorter than their name.

Therein dwell men from kennelled door to door,
Starved into meagre shape and timid gesture,
Like herded lambkins shepherded before :
Thine earth breathes sweet outside in springtide
vesture,
But they are not and know of it no more.

And children there grow up on blind staircases,
And up and down the self-same shadows wind,
And know not of the outside sunny spaces,
Where flowers bloom fair for happy hands to bind,
And must be children, children of a kind.

And budding girls are to the unknown turning,
And wishing back the peace of childhood eves ;
They find not that for which their hearts are burning,
And close again their open-trembling leaves.
And have in black back-garrets all untended
The days of disappointed motherhood,
The listless whimpering of long nights unended,
And cold years with no courage in the blood.
And all in darkness stand the beds for dying
To which they like a beggar woman fade,
Till by the slow consumption of their sighing
They at the last are on the death-bed laid.

THE WOMEN TO THE POET.

BEHOLD how all is opened : we are so ;
For we are but such blessedness in space.
What in a beast was blood and dark, did grow
To be a soul in us, and cries apace

For thee, as a soul ever. Thou indeed
Takest it only up into thy face
As it were landscape : gently and with no greed.
And so we think, for whom its pulses race

It is not thou. And yet, art thou not he
To whom we lost ourselves till naught remained ?
And shall we ever in any other be ?

With us infinity fades like a mist.
But thou, O mouth, so that it be explained,
Be ! O thou teller unto us, exist.

ABISHAG.

I.

SHE lay, and serving-men her lithe arms took,
And bound them round the withering old man,
And on him through the long sweet hours she lay,
A little fearful of his many years.

And many times she turned amidst his beard
Her face, as often as the night-owl screeched,
And all that was the night around them reached
Its feelers manifold of longing fears.

As they had been the sisters of the child
The stars trembled, and fragrance searched the room,
The curtain stirring sounded with a sign
Which drew her gentle glances after it.

But she clung close upon the dim old man,
And, by the night of nights not over-taken,
Upon the cooling of the King she lay
Maidenly, and lightly as a soul.

II.

The King sate thinking out the empty day
Of deeds accomplished and untasted joys,
And of his favourite bitch that he had bred—
But with the evening Abishag was arched
Above him. His dishevelled life lay bare,
Abandoned as diffamed coasts, beneath
The quiet constellation of her breasts.

But many times, as one in women skilled,
He through his eye-brows recognized the mouth
Unmoved, unknissed ; and saw: the comet green
Of her desires reached not to where he lay.
He shivered. And he listened like a hound,
And sought himself in his remaining blood.

LOVE-SONG.

By what device shall I my soul prevent
From touching thine? My soul how shall I lift
To other things above thee? Great
Indeed is my desire to have it pent
In something lost in some still spot, and let it mate,
With darkness which thy gladness shall not rift,
And which shall not with thy own deeps vibrate.

But all that touches us,
Takes us together, thee and me, as does
A fiddle-bow one voice prolong
Out of two chords. Upon what instrument
Then are we stretched? What master's face is o'er
us bent?
O sweet song.

THE ELOPEMENT.

OFTEN as a child she had escaped
Her women to behold beneath the skies,
Because inside they are so otherwise,
The wind weave when the evening first is draped;

And yet no night of tempest ever had
Into such fragments torn the giant park
As it was now torn into by her bad

Conscience, since down the silken ladder's fall
He took and bore her onward through the dark

Until the carriage was all.

And the black vehicle she smelt,
And round it chase in hiding,
And danger.
And he was faced with cold, she felt,
And the blackness and the coldness in her gliding.
She crept into the collar of her cloak,
And felt her hair, as if it were not riding,
And she, strange, heard how a stranger
Spoke :
I am by thee abiding.

ESTHER.

THE serving-women combed for seven days thorough
The ashes of her torment and her sorrow
Out of her hair the sediment and deposit,
And bore it out and dried it in the sun,
Spice that they did not feed it with was none
Another day and this one ; but then was it

The time when she, now being all anointed
Even as a corpse is, at no hour appointed
Should enter in the open palace grim
In order at the way's end to behold
The face of him concerning whom we are told
That any one must die who looks on him.

As though the ruby of her crown were dull
Before, she felt it flash ere he was seen
And filled herself already with his mien
Like to a vessel, till she grew so full

That she flowed over with the monarch's might
Or ever on her face the third hall gleamed,
That ran green over her with the malachite
Of its four walls. But she had never dreamed
With all her gems so long a way to wend her,
And they grew heavier with the King's great splendour
And with her terror cold. She, wandering,
Went on till, when she saw him there recline,
Towering upon a throne of tourmaline,
Before her, looking verily like a thing :

The right handmaiden took her fainting, and
Upreared her in the reach of the monarch's hand.
He touched her with his sceptre's point, and she
Conceived it without senses, inwardly.

ALBERT ROFFHACK,

b. 1837. d. 1906.

AT THE GATE OF HAMADAN.

It was an old priest bowed by weight of years ;
Leaning upon his staff he walks full slow,
And ponders on his Book with puckered brow,
While down the furrows of his face run tears,
At the gate of Hamadan I met him so.

Be greeted, Seid ! And say, why weepest thou ?

Son, be thou also greeted ! answered he.
Thou seest, I read God's Word ! so beautiful

Is this, its beauty overcometh me.
Yea, beautiful it is, I spake, and beauty
Moves tears, when, like the moon above the marsh,
Sheer out of ugliness we see it rise.
But thou indeed art an old man, and readest
Not in the Koran for the first time now,
And thee its beauty can no more surprise.
Forgive me if my words seemed to deceive,
He said : but, when my zealous spirit seeks,
I find a hundred verses where I grieve
That so obscure and short the Prophet speaks
What Gabriel the Angel him conveyed.
Else there would stand the very opposite
Of that which is this day on us enjoined !
May be, I said. But be not thence dismayed ;
Sagaciously the sage interprets it.
More bitterly than ever then he wept :
Yea, were it but the Prophet much that slept !
But thousand passages show all too clear
That even the Angel understood awry
What he was bidden by almighty God
Deliver to the chosen Prophet's ear.

And we were entering at the City gate.
The tears were shaming him, and fain had I
Consoled him, but he dived, precipitate,
Taking scant leave, into an alley blind,
Still murmuring :

 This is but half of the evil,
That Angel and that Prophet know the Word
But wrongly. But when one must see, besides,
That even the Other himself . . .

 No more I heard,
As he beside a penthouse disappeared.

RICHARD SCHAUKAL.

b. 1874.

THE NIGHT I GREET.

THE night I greet.

Down the marble steps she comes, in thought
Sunken, with slow naked feet.

Dream is holding up her train with stars inwrought.

SOUNDS IN THE NIGHT.

THINE eye-lids hath grazed,
Tender and light,
With soft downy plumes the bepraised,
Fairy-tale bird of the night.

His great, green wings
Are heavy with dreams as they sway.
Listen, he sings
Of forests of palms, and sweet and wonderful
things:
He comes from far, far away.

LOVE AND DEATH.

IN soundless sandals enters at the gate of joy
Death in a gown of wavy white; his fingers dried
Bend the red tendrils of the vine aside;

But on the threshold lo ! a slender boy,
With burning cheeks Love's naked page-boy dares
The tall, dun visitor who smiling asks: Thinkst thou
There is no other path to me remaineth now
Than these thy rose-strewn stairs ?

A TALE OF WOE.

To a fair golden maid my heart I brought.
She took it, and smiled.
I knew not how maidens are minded : I thought,
In the joy that I had: Now the child
In her cupboard will lay it away,
And carefully store it.
But she cast it out into the day,
And the coach of the hours came rumbling along
where it lay,
And ran right o'er it.

COPHETUA.

THEN King Cophetua raised his golden crown
From off his golden locks, and nothing said.
Leaning upon his sword he rambled down
The steep stairs, never turning round his head
To see his courtiers' gaze upon him bent.

In cloak of dense hair wrapped round breast and thighs,
Her paleness glimmering in the moonlight, sate
A beggar woman. A renouncement great
Lay in the shining wetness of her eyes.
And so she dreamed, bare of all ornament.

And o'er his knees with polished iron plated
 His golden diadem Cophetua laid,
 And waited on the stairs till the gentle maid,
 The mourning maid should see him, imploringly waited,
 Nor looked to see where they who served him went. . .

THE BRAVO.

As far as the mirror you may go—
 Lean on my arm!—
 And once more scan your beauty: so!
 From golden hair to each rosy toe,
 White as you are and warm.

But then, you see this blade I drew
 Just now? Observe what I'm about!
 Close your eyes of the cornflower's blue:
 I shall pin your heart, I warrant you,
 And on the carpet lay you out.

THE FIDDLER.

A FIDDLER stood on the curb and scraped.
 It rang so red, and royal, and blithe.
 His hard chin lay on the violin.

A lad stood rooted there, and gaped. . . .
 Every stroke was the sweep of a scythe—
 To the throng it was only a street song.

THE QUEEN.

PAGE-BOY, shy, golden-haired,
Why do you redden and pale?
Why do you quail, and shun me? Scared?
See that nobody gets to know:
You are going to be my sweetheart, though
Like a thief I must take my pastime,
Or else the first may be the last time.
You must not be timid, you must harden
Yourself, and come to-night into the rose-garden,
And wrapped in a thick veil I will hide
In the shadow that from the palm-house falls.
Then to the marble bath we will glide
With its glittering smooth white walls.
And round my royal body bare,
As soft as a bud,
You shall wind your arm,
And we will crown our hair
With roses white as milk and red as blood.
And you shall carry me down the stair
To the scented water blue.
Only one of my women,
The youngest, and the fairest too,
Shall be sitting on the rim in
Her raven tresses that you shall undo,
With her wonderful limbs so delicate and slender,
Singing low love-songs tender.

PORTRAIT OF THE MARQUIS DE —.

ONE of you cowards, come and hold my stallion,
One of you fetch my sword, you, you tatterdemalion:
In a lady's chamber I left it lying.

One of you rascals set a falcon flying:
I will lose myself in the blue as I follow its flight.
None of you beasts get into my light.

MUSSET.

I LIE awake with a cigarette
In the silken bed of my little girl,
My darling, dainty sweet Ninette,
Tired to death and sleepless yet,
And into a poem the smoke I curl.

Who the devil are you, my brains to rob?
You little goose, when I look at you,
And your rounded legs with their *viens* of blue,
I can scarcely help beginning to sob
For the sake of the one I lost and rue.

Your blood is thin and pale, and its motion
Is like quicksilver. You've got me down!
Where's my courage to face the town?
And O to sink you into the ocean,
Wrapped in your flowery dressing-gown!

HOMAGE OF THE CHEVALIER DE — TO
THE DUCHESSE DE —.

LIKE full white blossoms of the Maytime,
Round, and with rosy, tender points,
Are thy young breasts, Belovèd.

Over thy slender, flexible body
High they stand, and swelling ripen,
Sweet pomegranates on the supple stem.

Thou bendest down, and quietly they sink.
Thou kneelest, over thy soft arms
They glide with rosy beaks.

Thou standest, and with raised chin throwest thy
Rebellious hair into thy nape:
Proudly defiant are they lifted, standing stiff.

And if in lace and silk thou hidest them,
Forth pressing they arise as out of veils of mist,
White cupolas of quiet mountain temples,
Ungovernable under coverings shy.

THE DWARF.

MY mother bore me against her will :
She had me of an earl.
She could not sleep o' nights, poor girl,
And would be singing still.

Many songs of trouble she sang in the night-tide,
And once she woke and found me whimpering at
her side.

My chest is weak,
I've a big hump,
My hair is tangled and red,
Even as a child I had to jump,
With a white cheek,
And a loud whoop,
Before the ladies through a hoop.
O how I wish I were dead !

GOYA.

I HAVE spent this sultriest of long nights
With a young lady ! Now she lies and bites
My neck again, as she with open lips dreams of the
revel . . .
I'm going to paint now, all you people there you go to
the devil !
Don't stand there with your leather faces gaping !
I shall pluck your plumes out if you don't be shaping,
Or else my rapier point shall prod
Your calves that look like walking-canes.
I am by grace of God,
I am a *grandee* in an open shirt.
I love the light that inundates the earth,
I love a horse that rears against the reins,
And bursts the saddle-girth,
I love the Jew you can't convert.
And if His Majesty comes here to prate,
Tell him from me to knock . . . and wait.

THE OLD SLAVE WOMAN SPEAKS:

WITH stones that coldly shine
I deck thy hair flowing blue,
And thrust it through
With a small two-bladed dagger as fine
As a needle, against danger a defence,
Hid in thy warm scented coils of tresses dense.
Around
Thy narrow ankles rings of beaten gold,
Like serpents wound,
Swift poison hold.
Vouchsafe thy eyelids lift.
Shall I with purple grape
Redden thy teats?
Shall I with saffron colour them?
Callest thou for taut, brown girls to rape?
Or fleshy boys in their first heats?
Shall to the silver harp
Be sung a sweet anthem?
Or is it, Mistress of Life, thy will
To watch how Hassan's arms in tatters hanging kill
A panther foaming on to his sharp
Scimitar? Silent art thou?
O'ershadowed ponders thy brow
Pure as a mirror? Thou sinkest
Thy velvet lashes? Points thy chin to the piled
Fruit on the trees? Mistress, is what thou thinkest:
A child! ? . . .

PRINCE SCHOENAICH-CAROLATH. 179

SALOME.

IN hall with marble cool from daylight hiding,
King Herod lounges in great golden throne,
And yawns. Wreathed with white roses and with blown
Red poppies, naked Salome comes gliding.

And she dances with bangles gilding her delicate ankles,
Hides modestly with arms her breasts too young,
And, with anointed body forward flung,
Implores a remedy for love that rankles.

His thin hands stir, on the throne-arms reclining,
Slowly she sees beneath red lips the black beard stir . . .
. . . And when in his oily hair she sees his flushed face
 shining,
She feels, his rutting eyes already ravage her.

PRINCE EMIL ZU SCHOENAICH- CAROLATH,

b. 1852, d. 1908.

GRAY BIRD FLYING.

GRAY bird flying, flying,
Over the moorland ferns,
Thy crying is my crying
Out of a breast that burns.

180 PRINCE SCHOENAICH-CAROLATH.

The storm thy nest has taken,
And scattered it and spilt ;
And the pillars have been shaken,
On which my home was built.

Then let us sing together
The song of passionate pain ;
And sweep o'er the wasted heather,
And never come home again.

PARTING.

If you seek a maiden for your bride,
And she of another is fonder,
All you can do is into the wide
World to wander.

But of girls dark and fair a garland gay
Wherever a man goes is ;
As many as in a hedge of May
Bloom the wild roses.

And another joy to most men is given,
On which they had not reckoned,
As often enough the first nail is driven
Out by the second.

And if this device doesn't make you better,
Become a Capuchin monk,
And if in the cell you can't forget her,
Often get drunk.

PRINCE SCHOENAICH-CAROLATH. 181

And gamble for a wanton's kiss
Until the dawn is breaking—
If a soldier lost and stabbed you, this
Would cure your aching.

Drink on and on, but do not endure
The coarse saw idly spoken,
The grocer's saw which speaks of a cure
For hearts that are broken.

If she sends you to the right-about,
If the girl of another is fonder,
The best thing you can do is, out
Of the world to wander.

THOU ALSO !

Now art thou far departed
From noble battle-throes,
Thou art grown so quiet-hearted
In satisfied repose.—

Now is thy scarred breast, brighter,
From pain and contest free,
Like a billow, a giant fighter,
That grew tired of the sea,

And foamed up an inland river
From the ocean that cradled it,
And now lies, with never a quiver,
Deep-blue in the forest dim-lit.

What though it is soiled with the rotten
Flowers of the midsummer reeds,
What though far bells forgotten
Sound up from its mud-growing weeds ;

Though alders green sleep o'er it,
Where never eddy swirls—
It hath no storms to score it,
Nor hath it any pearls.

CARL SPITTELER,

b. 1845.

KING OF THE MIDDAY AND DUKE OF
BELLS.

FLUNG open are the forest portals sickle-shaped,
The King of Midday comes on charger velvet-draped,
The sun stays his career to see him canter by,
The barrier of the clouds saluting rears on high
The flying standard, mountains stretch themselves and
yawn.

But from the Minster Belfry to the grassy lawn
The Duke of Bells sends down, his royal liege to greet,
On floods of sound a carpet spread before his feet.
Shading with hand his eyes, the King of Midday peers
Above, then up the wall woven out of air careers.
What is his path? Of tones the tumult billowing.
The breathless, sultry air above awaits the King.

MAURICE REINHOLD VON STERN. 183

Hark ! Jubilant neighing of horses on the wall above.
Lord welcomes mighty Lord in loyalty and love.
Then riding round the Tower the pair of Princes hold
In muster all the world below their feet unrolled.
While bells storm round them, flags of winds around
 them sway,
Ennobles Majesty the busy working-day.

MAURICE REINHOLD VON STERN,

b. 1860.

SONG OF THE TROUBADOUR.

I WILL no longer in the shadows hide,
I will no more with serving-folks abide.
Give me light to drink,
Crown my hair !

Come out with roses when my lance is seen,
Greet me with wine and with the tambourine.
Give me light to drink,
Crown my hair !

Away, thou mist of melancholy night,
For I am young and strong and love the light !
In my red bandelier
My lute is hanging.
Give me light to drink,
Crown my hair !

VITA SOMNIUM.

THIS is the autumn's deepest quiet,
 No leaf upon the branches stirs.
 The brook, that soon shall run and riot,
 Drifts not the fallen cones of firs.

Stray yellowing leaves accuse September,
 And mind us of the coming gloom.
 The summer's songs we but remember,
 And only the dark dahlias bloom.

The high grass that the cold brook splashes
 Is bending withered to the ground.
 A long-drawn flight of swallows flashes
 On noiseless pinions Afric-bound.

And Mother Earth is gently calling
 Homeward all living things to rest ;
 And summer's dream is sweetly falling
 Upon the mist's grey silken breast.

PARTING SONG.

THE steeds are snorting, now farewell,
 For thou and I must part, love !
 My pain is more than I can tell,
 But, should I fare to Heaven or Hell,
 I bear thee in my heart, love.
 Farewell, farewell, farewell !

Now cracks his whip the driver gay,
The horses they are pawing.
Love is a service poor in pay !
One squeeze of hand, one look,—away !
The skinny steeds are drawing.
Farewell, farewell, farewell !

The carriage rattles on apace,
The heart would fain remain, love.
One last fleet glimpse of fluttering lace,
Now all is o'er—but, by God's grace,
We twain shall meet again, love !
Farewell, farewell, farewell !

MARGARETE SUSMAN,

b. 1874.

NO WORD OF LOVE.

WE have exchanged no word of love, no token.
Even to kiss my hand you did not dare,
As many a man has done who was not dear.
With you as with all others I have spoken,
You who have been to me my light and air,
My very breath of life for all this year.

Yet one thing I shall cling to fast, the story
Your eyes, those shining traitors, have confessed.
Even as a poor child caught in whirling snow
Clings to its doll, and thinks it bright with glory,
And warms it tenderly upon its breast,
And envies not the joys that rich men know.

FRANK WEDEKIND,

b. 1864.

PERVERSITY.

AN orphan child, her pale cheeks wet with tears,
With arms emaciated, hollow eyes,
Creeps forth, implores, upon my pity cries,
Stammers, and by me shuffling duns my ears.

The icy body that her hot lust sears,
Shivering with frost, to chafe to warmth she tries:
She cannot in my arms, and limp she lies,
Whimpering her hopes, her anguish, and her fears.

Groaning and feverish she slinks away,
She begs by night, and hides herself by day,
Now in despair, and now rapt into gladness,

Falls slowly into pain-allaying madness,
Recoils, exults, allows life's surf to take her,
Glad it should make her naked, dash, and break her.

ILSE.

FIFTEEN I was, a child untainted,
An unsuspecting child till then,
When first of all I grew acquainted
With the sweet joys that dwell in men.

His arm around my waist caressed me;
Whispering, "What happiness!" he said;
And gently, gently back he pressed me,
And on the pillow bent my head.

I love them all since those embraces,
In spring's most pleasant fields I lie;
And when men from me turn their faces,
It will be time for me to die.

WILHELM WEIGAND,

b. 1862.

BREAKERS.

O SUNBROWN days of island summer, full
Of cricket chirping and of sea-lament!
Still I can hear the sun-swept waves assaulting
The slope of silver olives from the sea:
Hissing of yellow manes racing to death,
Innumerable tears of God at play.
In crash and foam and royal march of billows
Image on image rolling into shape.
Onward they storm—attack of wild white chargers,
That raise their heads and melt in ambient light,
But rise again unburied and foam forwards,
To fetch me down into the sun-bright sea.
There comes a boat—through gauze of azure foam-
flowers,
Through happy bellowing into blessed places,

It glides on gay deeps over unsteady pathways
Into the face of evening's great deep glory,
Into the shining distances abysmal . . .
And stars are rising, stars innumerable !

AT THE WALL OF PARADISE.

Lo ! here I writhe with nails of iron forged
Fast to the soaring walls of Paradise—
My life a listening and a longing is,
A speechless thirsting and a hell—O hark !
The soft and sultry scent that bows my brow
Breathes knowledge of a glory without name :
Of chalices that I have never seen
As refuge for my ever homeless soul.
The sweet strange sound that whispers round my
 head—
Strayed echo of ecstatic melody
In bright-dark nights, fills with foreboding grief
My trembling breast : I am a listening breath.
And on cool marble now soft naked feet,
A sudden laugh, and fluttered rose-leaves fall
Athwart me, now the fountain's silver pillar,
I know, has bent, in the hot night's amorous
 breath
Over the basin by the keen breeze bowed,
Has cast three drops upon a shivering pair,
Whose cheeks are dyed like purple roses by
The sweetest fright, while kindles eye in eye
Still deeper, and—Silence once more, a silence
Nameless, that all absorbs, makes deeper all
The peace of Eden, torture of my vigil.

Only of noble lives the shadows gray
Arise, and stretch themselves, and, towering huge,
Walk on before my eyes, the fallow shadows
Of sound and scent with mien majestic,
Which mock me as they vanish, stinging me
To greedier thirst. And—sound again is wafted—
Stifled by kisses laughter, a bright word
Fallen from lips full of a wisdom deep,
Breathless a tone: a rustling of rich robes,
A naked step on marble terraces,
A glittering banquet,—now a goblet glides . . .
The night in roses . . . Hark !

O torture of Hell ! O fettered life by force !
For I am forged fast to the outer wall,
The soaring wall of sounding Paradise.

PAUL WERTHEIMER,

b. 1874.

SOULS.

You know we must be lonely, you and I,
Like tree-boles deeply dipped in gold and blue,
With free crowns kissed by winds that kiss the sea . . .
So near, yet wholly sundered, ever two.
And yet between us weaves a light how fine,
And silver odour playing in the boughs,
And ever rustles yearning to and fro . . .

THE CLOTH OF TEARS.

HANDS, many hands,
Never their task leaving,
Over the heath-lands
The cloth of tears are weaving.

Glides gray thread on thread,
Till it hold tightly,
For spirit hands to spread
Over the world nightly.

STEPHAN ZWEIG,

b. 1881.

THE DARK BUTTERFLY.

STILL glows my native land before me, clouded
By evening roses cool. And yet my mind
Stirs, and by the yearning song is shrouded
Of those who seek a home they shall not find.

This sorrow of my unknown brothers covers
My spirit with a sweet, sad pall of tears.
And the dark butterfly foreboding hovers
Over the gardens of mine earlier years.

The striking of the hours goes through my lonely,
My silent heart. And even I shrink beneath
The glory deep of women's glances, and only
Bear it like timid hands a withered wreath.

BRUGES.

LIKE old-time palaces are here the houses,
The evening folds them in a crape of gray.
And like the chamber after a carouse is
Each empty street, when into the night that drowns
The noisy guests are swallowed far away.

The gorgeous gateways with their rusty latches
No more to crowding revellers open sweep,
The dusty, weather-beaten Belfry matches
The troubled fog that its old turrets catches
In the clinging ocean of its sadness deep.

And in the niches of the ramparts hoary
Lean figures crumbling in the stricken stone,
And with no voice elaborate a story,
Murmuring the legends of the olden glory
That is the faded city's undertone.

PRINTED BY
THE WALTER SCOTT PUBLISHING CO., LTD.,
FELLING-ON-TYNE.

